# The New REPUBLIC

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## The Week

SOVIET Russian diplomacy is the best in the world because it is direct and honest. This is the merit of Litvinov's proposal of economic disarmament at Geneva. Some years ago, when the other nations were using the supposed threat of Soviet militarism as their excuse for not disarming, the Russians boldly proposed complete and universal abandonment of armies and navies. The proposal was met with cries of derision; it was thought insincere; but it called the bluff. Now the world is smoldering with fear of "Russian dumping" and with threats of a capitalist embargo against communist goods. Whereupon Maxim Litvinov, somewhat more tactfully than on the previous occasion, proposes that all nations agree not to discriminate against one another, and not to sell goods abroad any cheaper than they are sold at home. It was easy for him to demonstrate, by facts and figures, that Russia is not responsible for the surplus of goods now flooding and depressing foreign markets. He frankly admitted that there must be price competition, based on costs of production, between capitalist and communist industry. But he also stated a truth that would seem to be obvious when he said that Russia has no desire to disorganize world markets, since she needs the money from her sales to finance her purchases. It is to the advantage of Russia that international trade should be prosperous, as it is to that of the capitalist countries. If the rest will join her in a self-denying ordinance, all will profit. If they will not—and we do not believe that they will—they can no longer blame Russian wickedness for their self-imposed plight.

WHILE this general discussion is going on in Geneva, economic delegates from countries producing about 95 percent of the world's wheat exports are in London wrestling with the wheat surplus. They seem likely to be suffocated in it. One proposal is that quotas be allotted to the various nations, thus keeping off the international market excess supplies which drive prices to ruinously low levels. This sort of thing has already been agreed to in sugar, but it is more difficult in wheat. Russia demands her pre-war share of the world wheat trade; it cannot be granted without restriction of Canadian, Argentinian and American exports. Indeed, these countries would have to scale down their shipments drastically even if Russia were to withdraw from the market entirely. If quotas could be agreed to, the next problem would be how to enforce them. In such a large and loosely organized trade, this could be done, if at all, only by rigorous exercise of the police power of the several nations. Even then, the producers of the exporting nations would not benefit unless they could restrict output accordingly. And so far, no country has the mechanism by which that may be done, except Russia, which has no reason to do it and doesn't want to. The chief benefit of the discussions is likely to be a clarification of the problem; its solution must probably await a reorganized agriculture.

RECENT attacks against the established church of Spain seem to have subsided, but a mighty undertow is still agitating almost every aspect of Spain's national life. The provisional government is drifting perilously close to a dictatorship—which


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may place the country one step nearer to what some call the "Red menace." One thing is sure, however. The present regime feels that there is enough popular sentiment behind it to permit the enactment of drastic measures of a frankly revolutionary character. Both the Church and the nobility are on the verge of losing the last vestige of power. The sentiment in the country against the Church is very pronounced. Its tremendous wealth—said to be one-third of the total for the nation—and its traditional conservatism have several times in the past made it the target of popular assault. Charles III expelled the Jesuits from Spain in 1767 (they were admitted again in 1818); Mendizábal forced the sale of church lands in 1837; Catalonia revolted against the increasing power of monastic orders in 1909. These are only a few of the attacks to which the Church of Spain has been exposed. However, favored by the ruling class, it continued its encroachment upon almost every walk of life, until today it controls much of the industrial, transportation and educational activities of the country. Its annual income is estimated at 460,000,000 pesetas, of which 63,000,000 are paid by the government as compensation for the property expropriated in 1837 and 54,000,000 as salaries to the priesthood. Moreover, the Church is exempt from taxation, and, therefore, able to stifle private competition in every activity towards which it feels any inclination. It is very likely that all monastic orders of Spain will be expelled and the relations between the Spanish government and the Vatican severed before the national elections of next month. In this respect the policies of the government are being shaped by Fernando de los Rios and Indalecio Prieto, both Socialists and both free thinkers. Behind them is a large body of articulate public opinion, and the very fact that they have definitely decided to act before the national elections occur indicates that they feel certain that they are on solid ground.

THE United States Department of Labor continues to do its best to make America safe for nobody but the native born. During the past week it has insisted upon deporting to China a young Chinese student, Tao Hsuan Li, although he stands an excellent chance of being shot as a Communist by the Chinese government as soon as they can get their hands on him. The case is similar to that of Guido Serio, with which our readers are familiar. Li, a graduate of Stanford University and a Boxer Indemnity Scholarship student, is being deported solely because he is a Communist, although that party is legal in the United States and native citizens suffer no penalty for belonging to it and advocating its doctrines. Li, like Serio, has been refused permission by the Labor Department to depart voluntarily for some other country than China—Russia, for instance, which is willing to receive him. Such permission has in the past been granted to hundreds of other individuals; the rigid action in Li's case is part of the Hoover administration's general drive against alien radicals, a drive which has been denounced for its illegality in one of the reports of the Wickersham Commission. We wish someone would explain to us how the treatment of this young Chinese, a graduate of Mr. Hoover's own university, differs from legalized murder.

ANOTHER recent case which, while not involving a matter of life and death, sets precedents of great importance, is that of Loucas A. Loucas, a British citizen. Loucas was picked up by an immigration officer and held for deportation on the ground that he had entered this country illegally. When arrested he did not happen to have his passport on his person, but he sent for it and showed the immigration officers that he had entered legally under an immigrant's visa. Although the Department has now abandoned its argument that he is here illegally, it is still holding Loucas and refuses to release him until he can establish positively through formal proceedings the fact that he is entitled to be here. In other words, the government does not have to prove him guilty of anything; he has to prove himself innocent. Through his attorneys, Loucas has sought a writ of habeas corpus, which was refused in the United States District Court on the extraordinary ground that the Department of Labor is not through with him and that "it would be insupportable for the courts thus to interfere *ad interim* with the enforcement of our laws by the appropriate Executive Department." The case is being appealed to a higher court, and it certainly needs to be. If what the Department of Labor is doing is legal, it can arrest anybody, alien or citizen, at any time without the shadow of any evidence, and hold him indefinitely on the suspicion of his being a deportable alien.

MR. William L. Munro, president of the American Tariff League and of the American Window Glass Company, told the Connecticut Chamber of Commerce that a reduction of the tariff would bring on a revolution by lowering the standard of living of the American working man. Since the last increase of the tariff was followed by a drastically reduced standard of living, we would seem to be bound for revolution in any case, so long as we rely on any tariff policy at all. Lowering tariffs, said Mr. Munro, would not help our foreign commerce. Trade "is based on hard, cold facts, in which personal feelings have little or no influence where prices differ." Foreign nations buy from us only what they can get cheaper that way. But what about the cold, hard facts facing the American consumer of an article which he could get cheaper abroad than here if it were not for protection? Do the tariff advocates not appeal to his personal feelings in this case, to support a law

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which enables them to exploit him? Do they not talk about the danger of revolution and the standard of living of the American workman? It is perhaps true that by paying Mr. Munro an extravagant price for window glass we are helping to maintain his standard of living—though we have heard little of any prosperity among the window-glass workers. But what about more efficient industries, like automobiles, which can compete abroad? These are being injured by the incapacity of foreigners to buy motor cars because those foreigners cannot sell to us over our tariff wall. Our automobile workers' standard of living is definitely lower because Mr. Munro is bamboozling the rest of us into supporting him by charity of law.

AT LAST Walt Whitman is safely ensconced in the Hall of Fame. He enters that airy colonnade twenty-four years after James Russell Lowell, who once called Whitman "a rowdy." The unveiling of a bronze bust by Chester Beach reminds us that Whitman was in the Hall of Fame unofficially for a few hours in 1919. On his birthday, May 31, some of his admirers smuggled in a bust by Deré of France, and placed it next to the Lowell memorial. It was quickly ejected by the New York University authorities. . . . Lowell's epithet was applied at a dinner in Cambridge, given for a visiting nobleman. The guest mentioned that he had a letter to Whitman from some English notable. "For God Almighty's sake don't deliver it!" cried Lowell. "Do you know who Walt Whitman is? He is a rowdy, a New York tough, a loafer, a frequenter of low places, friend of cab drivers." The remark is remembered today when the less Brahminical side of Lowell's nature is being neglected along with his solid critical achievements. With the official recognition of Whitman's talent, however belated it may be, justice triumphs as in a melodrama.

## French Politics or German Economics?

THE Austro-German proposal for a customs union has snapped up the window shade and let us see how critically dangerous is the whole European situation. It is generally considered that the Council of the League of Nations achieved an important diplomatic victory when it managed to have the legal aspects of the question submitted to the World Court for an advisory opinion. Presumably the Court will take a long time in making up its mind; and thereafter, nothing can be done until the subsequent session of the League Council, which will be next autumn or later. The fact that a breathing space has been achieved is considered highly important; and while the judges go through the formality which is in reality the least important part of the matter, the struggle behind the scenes will continue unabated.

The chief legal point is whether or not the execution of the customs union would mean that Austria would surrender her economic independence, in contravention of the treaty of St. Germain. German and Austrian spokesmen insist that this is not the case, inasmuch as the two countries agree to give each other complete and equal free trade, and no alteration can be made in the scheme without the consent of both governments and ratification by both parliaments. Another important question is whether the proposal violates existing "most-favored-nation" treaties—that is, treaties in which both sides promise that they will give each other tariff rates as favorable as either of them gives to any third party. This aspect of the matter is one in which the United States is directly concerned, since we have numerous treaties of this character. The Germans and Austrians declare that their proposal does not violate such treaties, since it provides for complete free trade, and by general international practice, such a customs union is not considered as merely another tariff treaty. They further deny the French allegation that the negotiations were secret, and remind the powers that when the plan was first made public, they announced that they were only initiating what they hoped would be a general European customs union and that they would welcome the adherence of any and every other country.

The real sticking point, of course, is French opposition to any development in Europe which they believe tends toward the "Anschluss," the merging of Austria and Germany into one country, or short of that, which tends to strengthen Germany economically and thus make her a more dangerous opponent in that next war toward which French public policy fatalistically continues to look. Never for an instant since 1918 have the French wavered. It was their fear of Germany, plus, of course, the not unnatural desire for their own aggrandizement, which dictated the outrageously unfair terms of the treaties of 1919. The same policy caused the creation of the Little Entente and the retention of Poland as a French satellite.

Whether or not the negotiations for the proposed new customs union were secret, they undoubtedly caught French diplomacy napping; not in years has the Quai d'Orsay shown such frenetic activity as in the weeks which followed the publication of the Austro-German protocol. At the same time it must be admitted that French diplomacy has rarely shown itself more bungling and inept. In and out of season, M. Briand has been the chief exponent of the idea of pan-European union; and while he has always stressed political rather than economic aspects, free trade among the European states is so obviously a vital part of such a scheme that the French could not oppose it on theoretical grounds without making themselves wildly ridiculous. Realization of this fact no doubt

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helped turn the tide against him last week when he sought to retire into the presidency.

The French counter-offensive has consisted in the main of an attempt to buy off Austria with a loan—of which her government is badly in need at the present moment—and in a vague proposal for preferential customs treatment for Austria by the other signatories of the St. Germain treaty for a limited period of time. France has also set afloat trial balloons regarding an alternative customs union of her own, which would include the members of the Little Entente and would be buttressed by large loans to those countries. But loans, as the United States has discovered from its Latin American experience, are no substitute for business activity. Economically, such a customs union as France proposes would be as lopsided as that between Austria and Germany. Tariff agreements ought to be made between mutual customers, and not between rival producers. Germany and Austria are too much alike in exportable products to gain much advantage from the elimination of tariffs; and the same thing is true (with Czechoslovakia as a partial exception) of the members of the Little Entente. What Europe needs, and her necessity is becoming plainer and more urgent every day, is a general customs union which will embrace all the important industrial nations and the agrarian nations as well, including Russia. There would be vast benefit if the United States would also participate in such an agreement.

It did not need Litvinov's burning words in his Geneva speech this week to make it plain that, for the present, no sudden and magical seizure of common sense of this sort is even remotely possible. Although western Europe is suffering severely from the general business depression, now making itself felt even in France, the old ideas which have done so much harm continue to prevail. Perhaps capitalist civilization will not collapse, but on a basis of brains it certainly deserves to. While it is possible that in the breathing space now afforded, the French may adopt a broader and more intelligent attitude, it seems more likely that instead they will continue with added desperation their effort to dominate Europe and keep Germany as nearly prostrate as possible, even though they run the risk of bringing their own house down about their ears in the process.

# Liberty from What?

FROM THE earliest use of the word to designate a participant in a movement, or even an adherent to a school of thought, the liberal has been an apostle of freedom. If that be too drastic a word, its Latin and hence more refined and scholarly brother, liberty, cannot at least be forsworn. If a liberal is not to be defined by his belief in liberty, he has no right to the name. The question therefore arises, what kind of liberty those in the United States who are customarily called liberals really now desire.

When liberalism burst forth in Europe, the issues were clear. Men desired freedom of thought as opposed to the dogmatic imperatives of religion, which assumed to include the whole world of the mind and to prescribe what man must believe, not only about God and heavenly salvation, but about the earth and everything therein. The new imperatives of scientific logic had to break this bond; the way had to be cleared for experiment and reason, for the discovery of fresh truth. Men also desired freedom of action as against the earthly rule of the Church, the feudal lords, or the monarchical State. Old classes were breaking up and new classes were rising. New forms of behavior were following the geographical discoveries, the widening trade and the changing techniques of production and exchange. Freedom from mortmain in the control of land, freedom to earn and keep money, freedom to choose and limit one's own rulers, freedom to accumulate and invest capital, and, finally, in the full flower of its nineteenth-century expression, freedom to develop to their utmost the new techniques of production as against interference even from the quasi-democratic state—these were objects of liberalism.

We are sometimes puzzled by the bitter opposition which present-day schools of revolutionary thought of European origin exhibit toward the liberal. Yet, in view of its historical role in Europe, liberalism clearly deserves this scorn on the part of anyone who wants a drastically changed economic and social order. For the origins of the order which exists—except where a proletarian revolution has occurred—are clearly liberal. The whole course of eighteenth-century liberalism—philosophic, scientific, political and economic—favored the growth and supremacy of capitalistic society. It favored laissez-faire economics. When in Russia, for instance, the control of the revolution against absolutism was in the balance, it was truly seen that if the liberals won power, the outcome would be a civilization much like those which now exist in France or the United States, whereas if a new type of society was to be the result, non-liberal revolutionaries who did not wish to wait for the slow event of unchecked "social evolution" must gain the ascendancy.

It is a curious historical accident the full significance of which is not appreciated by themselves or by their opponents either on the Right or on the Left, that those who are usually called liberals in the United States are now found in opposition to so much of the existing political and economic regime in this country. For the American Revolution was essentially a liberal revolution. It was permeated with all the eighteenth-century aspirations for freedom. We got rid of a hereditary monarch, of foreign rule of every sort. We established complete freedom of religious conscience. It was with difficulty that anything like sufficient

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powers were reserved for our central government. We are constitutionally hedged about with all sorts of restrictions against abuse of political and civil liberties. The tradition of economic freedom is imbedded in our laws and institutions. We have had, to be sure, great struggles to discover just what liberty meant—as in the case where liberty of the slave to earn his living and change his job was opposed to the liberty of the Southern landholder to own slaves and the liberty of the states to decide whether he could or not. We are now engaged in a similar struggle about prohibition. But, on the whole, this nation deserves the name of a liberal democratic republic. Those who, in relation to it, are conservative, are the truly historical liberals in this country. A traditional liberal might logically oppose the government because it does not sufficiently safeguard, or actually interferes with, freedom of speech, of opinion, or of other civil rights. He might bemoan the fact that it imposes a protective tariff, or does not sufficiently enforce competition and break up monopolistic corporations. But all this is merely American fundamentalism. He could not, logically, want any drastic change in the world of production and trade, of accumulation and distribution, or of the ownership of industry. He could not be deeply dissatisfied with the way our civilization behaves. He could not desire a new revolution, even a slow and peaceable one, since his revolution took place a hundred and fifty years ago.

Why is it, then, that so many of those who as children were fired by the spirit of liberty and the American aspiration for individual independence have turned against the results which liberty has produced? Do they no longer want freedom? Or is the freedom which they desire a freedom from some new type of tyrant, a tyrant raised by liberty itself?

There are some intelligent and sensitive individuals, who, bewildered in the welter of modern civilization, do not want liberty of any sort. They want to rest their minds and consciences in some comprehensive absolutism, so that they may find an organized pattern of behavior which can supply them with esthetic values. These are the persons who retreat to such havens as religious orthodoxy, or to some European backwater of royalism or feudalism. But the dissatisfied liberals do not really want to surrender freedom of conscience or reason. Their conscience and their reason have led them to their existing dissatisfaction. A dichotomy has appeared in liberalism, wherein its premises are opposed to what appears to be its logical conclusion. The rigorous exercise of reason and experiment, the implacable demand to discover new truth, the confidence in the value of the individual personality, have led liberals to reject the civilization of which these things are supposed to be the basis. When such a dichotomy appears in the course of scientific thought, it is a sign that a new synthesis is impending. A new theory must be discovered to reconcile the two seemingly opposed principles, neither of which can logically be rejected. In this case of social experience, the meaning of such a contradiction must be the same as it is in the case of the reasoning experience of science.

The clue to the difficulty is that liberty is not the best conception with which to define the fundamentals in which American "liberals" really believe. It is true that they cherish the ability to discover new truth by the rigorous exercise of reason, and the ability to act accordingly; they do not want these faculties suppressed by some extraneous and arbitrary power. It is true that liberals do not want the individual personality restricted by some unintelligent or brute force. But, for these ends, something more than liberty is necessary. Such faculties may be thwarted, not merely by the powers of outworn absolutism, but by the chaos of indeterminateness which is the natural accompaniment of planless freedom. We are not concerned today with freedom from kings and churches; we are concerned with freedom from the blind compulsions of a disorganized and unreasoned society. Truth, reason and personal fulfilment require not merely freedom from irrational compulsion, but power to work out their proper principles of order. All three are today limited by the society which is based on a purely negative conception of liberty. We, both as a society and as individuals, need the power to suppress and control those meaningless liberties which conflict with the possibility of a truly humane and scientific social order—one in which the individual may find his true fulfilment without treading on the happiness and even the very lives of his fellows.

## The Pope and Labor

THE ENCYCLICAL of Pius XI, Quadragesimo Anno, on the fortieth anniversary of the encyclical of Leo XIII on the same subject, is profoundly true in its main premise—that spiritual considerations and the economic organization of society cannot be divorced. This is not a Christian order, and the behavior of its leaders is not Christian. The concentration of wealth, the immense disparity between the excessive prosperity of the rich and the destitution of the unemployed, and, what is still more important, the fact that the chief motivation of the most powerful individuals is to accumulate material goods, while they do nothing to prevent the evils of the system from which they benefit—these things are in grotesque contrast with the teachings of Jesus. Nor is general acceptance of the Pope's premise dependent on adherence to any one system of Christian theology, or even on belief in the Christian doctrines themselves. Any state of society carries its own intangible values; you cannot establish any set of moral principles in the lives of men without an appropriate human environment.

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The economic implications of Catholic doctrine, as set forth not only in the encyclicals of Leo and Pius, but still more so in the teachings of the early church fathers, are radical indeed. An editorial in The Catholic World for May makes this uncompromisingly clear. "The bread that you withhold," said St. Basil, "belongs to the hungry." St. Augustine declared, "They who possess superfluities possess the goods of others." "The earth," taught St. Ambrose, "belongs to all, not to the rich." Pope Gregory I wrote, "When we give necessities to the needy, we do not bestow upon them our goods; we return to them their own; we pay a debt of justice rather than a mercy." And, according to St. John Chrysostom, "No one is able to become rich without injustice." This straight speaking is far more than an injunction to voluntary charity. It constitutes a firm basis for the statement of Pope Pius that "It is therefore absolutely necessary to reconstruct the whole economic system by bringing it back to the requirements of social justice so as to ensure a more equitable distribution of the united proceeds of capital and labor."

These are brave words, but apparently they do not indicate the principal reason for the encyclical. If they did, the Pope ought to have devoted more attention to the question how the radical implications of the church doctrine are to be effectuated. What he says on this point seems to be a lame and watered-down conclusion. He talks about a "fair and just wage"; coöperation among the various trades, industries and occupations; the prudent application of Christian principles. This is not a formula of economic reconstruction; it is an appeal to those who now control our present economy to be good. It is not a recognition of the right of the worker to demand something better, but an admonition to the rich to exercise charity. Unless the full text of the encyclical, which has not been published as we write, contains something more than this, the Church has no new light to offer in the present economic crisis.

The encyclical is addressed primarily, however, not to the rich, but to labor. Its message to labor is that he who becomes a Communist loses his soul, and that "It is not possible to be at once a good Catholic and a true Socialist." While many points of Socialist teachings are conformable to the principles of the Church, "any agreement in doctrine remains always absolutely impossible." The Pope is really concerned, not so much with establishing a better economic order, as with saving for the Church the masses who are drifting to types of secular leadership which are beyond Catholic control or influence. We say this not in a cynical spirit; the Church correctly recognizes the danger to itself of movements like Communism, and, in lesser degree, Socialism, which really are rival religions, which exert an influence over every aspect of human behavior, spiritual and moral as well as economic, and which are in some respects as well organized as the Catholic Church itself. If the Pope really believes that a person must be a Catholic for the good of his soul, then it follows that he must combat such movements as Socialism and Communism, which are bound to diminish the membership and weaken the authority of the Church.

The question is whether his warnings will be any more effective in this endeavor than were those of Pope Leo XIII forty years ago. Unless the Church is able to offer a real alternative in economic life, one which is something more than bold words, its threats against radical movements will not hold men's aspirations or consciences. Its actual influence on the labor movements of the world has been, in many respects, to retard the coming of the era of social jusice which it advocates. In the United States, Catholic power in the trade unions has been largely conservative. It has been a strong force to keep the unions out of independent political action, because it has always tried to outlaw these socialistic influences which in every country have led labor into politics. In countries where Socialism has grown more than here, it has set up rival unions and parties which have divided the labor movement and have blunted its edge. The Church has in fact rested the fate of its economic principles on the dubious hypothesis that the change it professes to desire can be brought about by the good will of those who now are economically powerful, balanced by trade unionism "pure and simple."

All this is to be expected in view of the history of Catholicism as a temporal power. Since it first became a recognized institution, it has always been an ally—though often a critical and skittish ally—of the dominant forces in society, so long as these forces would tolerate it. If, in the future, socialism should come into being, we shall find the Church saying that socialism—by another name—is just what it has always been preaching. We shall find it attempting to make terms with the powers that be. It will try to adapt to Christian principles the doctrine with which agreement is now " always absolutely impossible."

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# America Sits on the Lid

A NEW KIPLING of economic eloquence and insight is needed to write the business recessional called for by the outcome of the "crisis conventions" of American and world trade leaders just concluded. The captains and the kings of commerce have departed, but the hosts of unemployed are with us still and will remain, for all that "business leadership" here or abroad is going to do about it.

But there was a great difference between Atlantic City and Washington. To the hopeful pilgrim seeking salvation by the laissez-fairies the U. S. Chamber meeting was a perfunctory performance, farcical and futile, with a faintly pharisaical perfume; but the Sixth Congress of the International Chamber, that body born of the last great world depression, fathered by American business, meeting for the first time in the country that had created it, was a spectacle of tragic frustration, impressed with profound pathos. No one who sat through its meetings, who saw them struggle with the obstacles to understanding offered by differences of race psychology and language, who examined the elaborate machinery of documentation, committee work and research, who noted the earnestness, intelligence and eminence of the foreign delegates, could fail to sense the seriousness and sincerity of this body or feel the force of its unavailing effort toward closer international coöperation. The American Chamber, in whose palatial halls it met, seemed a trifling pastime of tired business men beside it. These men, at least, were hoping and trying to do something, in face of enormous odds and difficulties; they were driven by a more desperate need, pushed toward some accomplishment by a more peremptory pressure.

Yet here as at Atlantic City an ineluctible creative impotence seemed to paralyze the proceedings and make their outcome empty and sterile, despite their earnest intention. Though in the American Chamber this was the result of the picayune personalities who were running the show and of the political wire-pulling involved in the performance, in Washington other factors were responsible. The foreign delegates included many able and forceful men, like Pirelli of Italy and Balfour of England; but the coolness of the official capital toward the conference, the careful control of its discussions by the American delegates, and considerations of courtesy to which they are accustomed, curbed their candor on crucial questions of war debts and tariffs. President Hoover spiked their guns at the outset by proposing armament reductions as a remedy for business depression and as a price of any economic concessions or coöperation on our part. Moreover, irreconcilable conflicts of national interest crippled the conference in any constructive coöperation on questions of commercial policy, reparations and war debts and Russian relations. Balfour had tried beforehand, by a questionnaire sent out from the Paris office of the Chamber, to rig an embargo agreement on Soviet imports, but the German and Italian delegates had been "bought off" by Russian orders and the British were afraid of being left behind.

The United States and France joined hands in framing a blanket resolution which tied all these troublesome issues together in a vague evasion, paid perfunctory respect to the President's pacifism, shook an anonymous fist at unfair Soviet competition, deplored trade barriers but took a side slap at the Austro-German customs-union project as a threat to the most-favored-nation principle. The question of silver stabilization, along with debt revision and some fifty other technical matters involving the mechanics of international commercial practices, was consigned by resolution to further study and conference in the future. The congress closed without a single important pronouncement of principle or policy or any concrete program of action to promote world business recovery.

If in the comparative calm with which this country is taking the crisis, business leadership at Atlantic City failed to produce anything very promising, it was perhaps impossible to expect very much from a mass of bewildered business men from abroad whose governments are sitting on volcanoes and preparing for war to escape internal explosions. These men stood desperate between the devil and the deep sea—the dominant financial power of the United States, on which they are dependent, on the Western horizon; the subversive social suggestion and insidious economic attack of the Soviet on the East. Worn weary by all the post-war years of struggle against chronic depression, their faith in the sufficiency of laissez-faire has been unconsciously enfeebled. Though they repeat their perennial protests against extension of governmental activity, they clearly look more and more to governmental support for their special industrial and national interests. Though they repudiate trade barriers, they are plainly preoccupied with the development of new protective devices by which to overcome the handicaps of old commercial treaties and fortify old-fashioned and outgrown tariff technique. Despite themselves they are being driven to concerted action through cartels, regional agreements and other "artificial" arrangements which are subjecting them to increasing state control. In the end every one of their schemes of coöperative private effort, whether to control sugar, tin or grain production and markets, has fallen back on govern-

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mental agencies to make them effective. In spite of itself European business is sliding swiftly toward state socialism in its search for stability and under the pressure for planned economic control.

This tendency carries with it new forms of economic nationalism. Despite the usual rhetorical insistence on the interdependence of nations, the most striking symptom of this meeting was the emphasis put upon inherent differences in economic structure and social psychology as a basis for recognizing and justifying divergences in domestic "industrial and foreign" commercial policies among the different nations. For the first time there was an evident inclination to admit that international interdependence is not uniform or universal, that international coöperation has its natural limits and intelligent nationalism its advantages. This realistic reaction against idealistic internationalism appears to be an important by-product of depression. The task of economic planning on a world scale has proved to be too large for business leadership; it appears possible to approach it only piecemeal. All of this was evident in the discussion of Russian and European-American trade relations, in the cautious comments on American tariff policies and in the concealed conflicts over the most-favored-nation principle; and its strongest expression came from Professor Donham of Harvard, who doubtless discovered at this conference that world business was as badly adrift as American on the deep seas of depression.

After all, the most impressive thing about the conference was the inescapable sense of aimless drift which it disclosed. There was a conspicuous absence of any common, comprehensive, coördinating ideas for either organized business effort to embrace or governmental policy to pursue, and a complete lack of any outstanding personalities with capacity for large-scale leadership. The psychology was one of anxious caution and conservative control, not of creative courage. It was turned backward to the past, not forward to the future. It was concerned primarily with discovering the causes of what has happened, exposing the follies, errors and evils of the past on the part of others, reconstructing and readjusting things to a previous condition, resisting remedies that have been proposed, complaining at handicaps in the way of recovery, elaborating alibis, not with opening new paths or even carrying on the constructive accomplishments of recent years.

These in fact were largely condemned and repudiated. The wicked War was unanimously elected the scapegoat. The depression was due to it and to the overexpansion, overproduction, overspending, the war debts and tariffs, which followed it. There was no remedy except to restore the status quo ante by thrift, hard work, restricting production, canceling debts, lowering tariffs, reducing wages and living standards and abandoning all "artificial" efforts to check deflation and postpone readjustment. How, in all these details, to get back to where we were before 1914 was the problem with which, in one way or another, nearly everyone was concerned. Only here and there was there occasional recognition of the possible need for new forms of governmental or organized business effort to meet new problems or promote further progress, and then only in the matter of employment stabilization, where the skeleton of social unrest rattled in the closet.

The prevailing mood of the meeting was a mixture of petulant complaint, picturesque pessimism and pious resignation to the prospect of prolonged depression. The delegates would gladly have thought of something to do about it, but they couldn't, and so ended by comforting themselves with the conclusion that there wasn't anything. The debts and the tariff were appropriate talking points because everyone felt that these at least were matters about which there was not the remotest chance of doing anything in time to be of any use in this depression. There was considerable self-satisfied cynicism about the success of supposedly depression-proof American industrial policies, particularly high wages and mass production, and insistent skepticism as to their application to Europe. Every remedial idea, in fact, was critically picked to pieces, and the impossibility or unreasonableness of expecting the conference to produce any panaceas was loudly and repeatedly protested. "We are not magicians," said President Theunis; "we are only men, but men of good will." Still it was hard to avoid asking whether good will alone is enough, even granting that the good will was there. One saw only an assembly of old, disappointed, disillusioned men, nourishing their grudges, defending a dying order, coddling themselves with excuses for its failure. They meant well, but that meant nothing.

It is said that in 1933 this lost battalion of world business leaders may assemble in some Balkan country, turning fatalistically from the West to the East, drawn by some subtle instinct to the rising sun. Who knows but that six or eight or ten years hence these pilgrims may find their Mecca in Moscow?

HOMER HUDSON.

## Merciful Medusa

Sleep is a merciful Medusa, bending,
Under her sluggish and outrageous hair,
A steady gaze of bronze, superbly blending
All creatures in her one impersonal stare.

Bird, beast and man, worn out with lovely moving,
Seek her at night, forlornly and alone,
Cry to her to be pitilessly loving,
Look on her face and turn to grateful stone.

WINIFRED WELLES.

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# A Senator and an Engineer

AT THE END of the Hotel Carlton ballroom, with its sumptuous crimson curtains, painted beams and imitation Renaissance chandeliers, Senator Norris, his face pink from a strong lamp, is addressing the progressive conference in front of a dark expensive-looking tapestry and behind a shiny nickel-plated microphone. He is an old-fashioned political speaker, with hard Western r's and the rhetorical flowers of another age; the power trust is "the most gigantic, far-reaching and comprehensive monopoly which has ever been devised by the mind of man" and has "secretly enmeshed its slimy fingers into the warp and woof of human life," but before the "onward march" of public opinion, "the influences of monopoly, corruption and dishonesty" will "fade away as the morning mist disappears before the rising sun."

He is a short gray-haired man in a neat black suit, with a white shirt, low collar and old-fashioned black bow-tie, a thin gold watch-chain stretched from the top of his vest pocket to a lower vest pocket on the same side, and trousers that wrinkle over black polished shoes. His hair, brushed straight back in a crest, has a fine Western breeziness and defiance. He has dark circumflex eyebrows, old eyes, a small mouth with a gleam of gold teeth in one corner—a gentle sensitive face, very stubborn, though beginning at last to break down under unyielding opposition and old age. His carriage is straight; he lifts his head and raises his eyebrows with exhilarating haughtiness and disdain over a letter from Senator Watson, the Republican leader of the Senate, in which the latter tries to bait the progressive conference: "The people of Indiana are as fine a people as live anywhere, but they sometimes do comical funny things and they certainly perpetrated a gigantic joke upon the country when they elected little Jimmy Watson to the United States Senate. . . . We cannot waste our time with men who are as far behind the march of civilization as he is and as far backward. This is not a kindergarten. Moreover, little Jimmy Watson ought to, to be in his proper sphere and in his real class, gather together his marbles, go out and hunt up that boy Lucas and together they could have a fine game in the backyard of the White House!"

But there is no virulence in his sarcasm—even his denunciation of Watson reveals an essentially sweet nature. And his gestures—old-time orator's gestures of exceptional elegance—show fine white hands with tapering fingers. But after a career which has included an effort to oppose America's entrance into the War and which has recently culminated in an attempt on the part of the National Committee of his own party to prevent his election by accusing him of cruelty to his children and of luxurious living in a cottage built partly by his own hands, and confusing the voters by putting a grocery clerk with the same name on the ballot—his defiant look of pride sometimes passes into a pathetic look of pain.

He speaks at length about the power trust, which he has been fighting since Roosevelt's time and looking to the memory of Roosevelt for inspiration. He shows that Buffalo, which depends on the power trust, has to pay more than twice as much for its electricity as Toronto, which owns its own power, though Toronto is obliged to transmit its current more than four times as far from the same river; that Rochester, with a population of more than 300,000, is charged four times as much as Ottawa, with 120,000; that the city light superintendent of Seattle, who was on the point of getting the city to vote for public ownership, has just been discharged by the mayor, at the instigation of the power trust; and that Hoover's Power Commission, dominated by the same interests, has just thrown out one of the ablest of its experts, who had attempted to prevent the padding to the tune of more than five million dollars of the cost of the Clarion River dam. "So, my friends, this power trust gets in its work. . . . What is the object of government, my friends? As I look at it and as our forefathers looked at it when they enunciated the Declaration of Independence, they said that the object of government was life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. . . . Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness! That is what we are here for. That is what Congress is up there for. That is what the President ought to be there for. That is what you have your state governments for. That is what we ought to get out of government. . . . The object of government is human happiness. . . . Old Ben Adhem in the ancient days, that old soldier, was awakened one night from his slumber by an angel writing in a book. . . . Oh, my friends, we ought to lead our political life and our religious life so that when the end comes our names can be written upon that scroll in eternity's language that we are down as those that loved their fellow men!"

## II

The Taylor Society of scientific managers are giving a dinner for one of the American engineers who has been in Russia working with the Soviets. The dinner is not a very good dinner: it is a wholesale production without taste or imagination and rather unappetizingly cooked. But it makes no pretense to be anything else: the Taylor Society is an organization of efficiency experts and the discus-

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sion of efficiency is to be the main feature of the evening. From the point of view of scientific management, the whole affair has been admirably arranged: dinner is announced and served early, on the dot of 6:15, so that there may be plenty of time for speeches afterwards, although the speeches themselves, on the other hand, are to be rigorously limited and expedited by planting an egg-boiling glass which runs exactly three minutes under the noses of the speakers.

For the rest, there are certain amenities: the dinner takes place in the Fraternity Club under festively painted beams of precisely the same kind as those in the ballroom of the Hotel Carlton at Washington, where Senator Norris spoke on the power trust; and there is a fancy niche behind the speakers' table in which one vaguely imagines the ikon of Frederick Taylor, that great Pennsylvania engineer, factory organizer and inventor of labor-saving devices, the patron saint of scientific management. Over a handsome and convivial stone fireplace is the strangely incongruous motto: "*Dum vivimus vivamus.*"

Mr. H. J. Freyn is the president of the Freyn Engineering Company of Chicago, and he has lived for four years in Russia advising the Soviets on the construction of their steel mills. He is a shortish but very solid and strong-looking man all in one piece, with an extremely thick bull-neck, hair that bristles straight up on his head and rather small greenish eyes behind thick-lensed rimless glasses. He has a slight German accent, and speaks earnestly but with occasional irony. One somehow has a feeling that he expects an attitude of opposition on the part of his audience.

It is hard, he begins, to talk about Russia. A friend of his who has been there a good deal found out, when he came back from his first trip, that people who asked you about Russia always did one of two things: they listened to you with interest when you told them what was taking place, or they froze up completely as soon as you began to talk and refused to hear a word you said. And he had finally adopted this policy: when people wanted him to tell them about Russia, he always asked them first whether they wanted to hear good news or bad news.

Now the Taylor Society have asked him to talk to them about the management side of the Five Year Plan. Well, they have sent him a bulletin explaining the Society's own aims. According to this prospectus, it is the Taylor Society's desire to promote "the full understanding and the adoption of the principles of administration and management which, intelligently applied to organized effort, are conducive to the gradual elimination of unnecessary labor and unduly burdensome toil in the accomplishment of the work of the world"; the Taylor Society is "inspired by the conviction that only those enterprises can sustain themselves which meet a genuine economic need, as ascertained by careful analysis of markets—those which conduct their operations through plans, schedules and methods that eliminate waste of human and material energies employed, and which maintain the spirit of working together toward a common end through harmonious personal relations." And he will attempt to analyze the Five Year Plan from the point of view of the Taylor Society's program.

As he proceeds, it becomes apparent that the ideals conceived by the Soviets are precisely those of the Taylor Society and that it is their aim to put them into practice on an unprecedented scale. From his observation of the steel and iron industry, he would say that "the principles of administration and management" are decidedly being "intelligently applied"—that the Soviets are "eliminating unnecessary labor and unduly burdensome toil" at a rate which will eventually make it possible "to replace hard labor by machines and the products of home industry by the mass production of factories. In this respect, the Soviet Union proposes to go much further than the so-called capitalistic countries. Whereas, elsewhere in the world, and notably in the United States, the trend of the times is toward the creation and organization of large and powerful corporations, toward consolidation of banks, manufactories, steel companies, railroads and power concerns, the Soviet government has frankly embarked upon a policy of complete state control, embracing practically every human activity." The worker and the small peasant are to be assured of "an existence of contentment and reasonable comfort"—and one of the means to this end has been the establishment of the seven-hour working day and the five-day continuous week. He asserts that "the Soviet state may readily be considered one huge industrial organization, or economic enterprise, 'designed to meet a genuine economic need' " —and leaves it to the members of the Taylor Society to assign it to the category of "those enterprises" as to which the Society is "inspired by the conviction" that they, and they only, "can sustain themselves." As for the "careful analysis of markets," he does not believe that this is necessary, "for the domestic market is virtually unlimited." And so forth.

The Taylor Society listen impassively—with the exception of one sharp-faced old man, who holds his hand behind his ear, takes notes and occasionally asks to have figures repeated, and a younger man, the full-blown type of the busy and cheerful prosperity-promoter, florid, with a cigar, round bone glasses and a yellow toothbrush mustache, who begins by laughing at every statement which suggests that the Soviets aren't as smart as they thought they were, but relapses, as the enthusiastic tenor of Mr. Freyn's paper becomes plain, into a kind of dazed smirk.

There is only one item of the Society's program which Mr. Freyn does not explicitly take up: "the spirit of working toward a common end through

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harmonious personal relations." He does, however, try to explain what personal relations under the Soviets are like. He reminds his audience that, in view of the fact that "the three most momentous historical events, the American and French Revolutions and the Protestant Reformation, passed over old imperial Russia without leaving any imprint upon the destinies of that vast country," it is "no wonder that the triumph of modern democracy could not be established." The Soviet government is frankly a dictatorship, but a dictatorship at the present stage is thought "essential for the welfare of the people." And it now appears that Mr. Freyn is far from regarding our kind of democracy as an ideally satisfactory arrangement: "a modern business enterprise can scarcely be operated or managed by applying the principles of democracy . . . on the contrary, the strong hand and mind of business executives are required, who know what they want and what is needed for the good of the enterprise." As a matter of fact, the Soviets are perhaps still a little too democratic: he has often wished "that more decisions might be made by responsible individuals rather than by committees and commissions."

He pays tribute to the unselfishness and integrity of the Soviet officials, who live like Spartans and are ready to work themselves to death; explains that the Soviets, far from trying to suppress their mistakes and difficulties, maintain a policy of free publicity for bad news and free criticism of the government, which has supplied the capitalist press with most of its ammunition against them; and denies that the trial of the engineers could possibly have been a put-up job, as these technicians had been badly needed and couldn't have been sacrificed for a sensation. He speaks of "the insidious schemes of these marplots," and says that he himself had experience of their sabotage.

In all this, he rarely mentions Communism, but as he goes on, one begins to get the impression that he is as much sold on it as any class-conscious proletarian rallying around the Thirteenth Street headquarters. He talks with conviction and emphasis—he is defending the Soviets, one realizes, he is giving expression to his admiration for them, he seems even to have ended, after four years, in catching something of the fervency of their faith.

The outside world, he says, has been led to believe that if the Five Year Plan fails, the Soviets will fall. "Such ideas have no basis in fact. I believe that should the pressure become too great and lack of capital and credit too serious, the program will merely be slowed up and the time extended. I further believe that if the gigantic Five Year Plan were completed by the end of 1933 even to only 75 percent, a remarkable technical and managerial feat, unparalleled in the world's history, will have been achieved."

So he ends, and sits down. An economist from Brookings Institute gets up to open the discussion which follows: "Mr. Freyn, in his detailed, comprehensive and almost impartial account of the Five Year Plan"——

EDMUND WILSON.

# Jimmy Walker and Oakey Hall

## *A Parallel with a Moral*

"WE KEEPS a Hartist" was the heading of an extraordinary editorial in The New York Times on the morning of October 9, 1871. "It was a London barber, we believe," The Times remarked, "who, inspired by a noble ambition to distinguish himself from the vulgar herd of his fellow craftsmen, announced to the genteel world that—using the royal pronoun—'in our establishment for the prosecution of the tonsorial art we keeps a hartist.' . . . Outside the honest, but humble, callings, too, the need has been acknowledged of someone who could throw over unpleasant details and ugly facts the charm of manner, who could keep clean hands while doing dirty work, who could give fine names to foul things, and use the grand old name of gentleman as a mask, behind which to do most ungentlemanly deeds." The Times then went on to refer to the characteristics of A. Oakey Hall, the most entertaining mayor New York had ever enjoyed until the arrival of Jimmy Walker at the City Hall.

There are interesting points of similarity and difference between A. Oakey Hall, the Tweed ring's corrupt and engaging mayor of New York, and James J. Walker, Tammany Hall's latest representative in that office. Both of them have the irresistible charm of frankness which, unfortunately, is not an absolute guarantee of executive competence or of rectitude. Jim Fisk was a charming fellow, who stole as much of other people's resources during and after the Civil War period as any man in the United States except his close personal friend William M. Tweed, who was also an amusing man, and Tweed's henchman Mayor A. Oakey Hall, with whom geniality amounted to a vice. It is a melancholy fact that only too frequently in our history we have found behind the gay butterfly calculating, sinister, careful, business-like figures, such as Jay Gould in the case of Fisk, Peter ("Brains") Sweeny in the case of Tweed and Hall, and the Daugherty Boys in the case of Harding.

But, for the booth of the civic Punch and Judy

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performance there should be, if convenient, a clever person, whose brains must be applied pertly, wittily and lightly to the art of repartee, and never to the science of government. We, say the invisible governors of politics and finance, will take care of the government. Jimmy Walker loves to wisecrack; Oakey Hall loved to pun. When he was leading the fight against the clean-books bill in the New York state senate, Jimmy Walker "turned his winning, neat-toothed smile on the opposition and said, nimbly: 'This is the first time I've heard of any book ruining any young woman.'" When he was district attorney of New York County, A. Oakey Hall gave as the secret of his success: "Few persons have so many *tried* friends as I have, and tried friends are always magnanimous." Mayor Walker once announced that he was going to see the rodeo, because he "wanted tc see the bull thrown in the open." When the gas suddenly went out in the middle of his lecture before the New York University students on "Law in New York," Mayor Hall remarked that there seemed to be a conflict of one gas with another. It's enough to make a man believe in reincarnation.

Mayor James J. Walker is the author of "Will You Love Me in December as You Do in May," and other popular songs; Mayor A. Oakey Hall was the author of "Humpty Dumpty," a burletta, a play called "Fernande," and another called "Let Me Kiss Him for His Mother." While he was mayor, the Olympic Theatre in New York produced A. Oakey Hall's extravaganza, "Loyalina, Brigadier General Fortunio and His Seven Gifted Aides-de-Camp." While he was in London during his term of office, studying the housing and transportation problems of that city, Mayor James J. Walker took over the piano at the Café de Paris and played his most popular song for the benefit of the members of the cast of "Lady Luck" and other patrons of the cabaret, who all rose and joined in the chorus.

A newspaper of the period remarked of the mayor: "Oakey Hall is the best dressed man in the annals of mayordom. He wears a different necktie every day." Mayor Walker's costumes have been the subject of more comment than he can possibly enjoy. But Walker has not yet appeared on St. Patrick's Day in a suit of bright green, with green kid gloves to match, in order to review the parade, as Oakey Hall did on March 17, 1870.

Until very recently the newspapers and the public were overjoyed at the presence of a man in the mayor's chair who could crack jokes, wear a top hat at a fetching Broadway angle and play jazz on the piano, and New York has not yet got over its delight at the fact that during the Walker administration the Central Park Casino has been turned into a roadhouse for the notorious. When A. Oakey Hall was a candidate for mayor, his friend James Gordon Bennett printed in his Herald:

> It will be a refreshing novelty to have for Mayor of New York a strictly upright, honorable, capable man, and at the same time one who writes a drama or a farce with equal success, acts a part as well as most professionals on the stage, conducts the most difficult cases on the calendar, sings a good song, composes poetry by the yard, makes an effective stump-speech, responds to a toast with remarkable eloquence and taste, mixes a lobster salad as well as Delmonico's head cook, smokes the best cigar in New York, respects old age, and admires youth, as poets and orators invariably do.

New York enjoyed Hall's puns and his speeches enormously until, whipped into a rage by the disclosures of The New York Times and the superb caricatures of Thomas Nast in Harper's Weekly, it suddenly discovered that it was being robbed by Hall, his boss Tweed, and their friends Connolly and Sweeny, on a colossal scale. The extent of their thefts has never been estimated and never can be accurately, because the city's books were suddenly stolen. The lowest estimate of expert accountants was that during Mayor Hall's term of office, from 1869 to 1872, the city was robbed of $30,000,000, and other accountants, just as expert, insisted that the sum was as high as $75,000,000. It was also estimated, after the storm of disclosures was over, that from 1865 until 1871 "Elegant Oakey," Tweed and their associates had stolen $200,000,000 from the people of New York, which some people regarded as a high price for entertainment, so the burlesque show was taken off at the next election. When asked about these proved charges of The Times, A. Oakey Hall told reporters that he never read newspaper comments on himself. He followed, he said, the rule of the late Abraham Lincoln, and always turned to another part of the paper when he saw his own name mentioned. Whether or not this was true of Lincoln, it certainly was not true of A. Oakey Hall, for, fortunately for posterity, he collected every newspaper clipping he could find about himself in any language, and the fourteen huge scrapbooks in which they repose were donated by his daughter to the New York Public Library, and now form a valuable part of the collections of that institution.

Mayor Walker once told an interviewer: "I never read anything I don't have to. Friends say to me, 'How do you know what's going on?' I don't. Or if I do, I must inhale it. I don't even read newspapers, because if I read in one newspaper something that interested me, I would want to read all the other papers to see how they treated it. As a matter of fact, I once said—and it is true—I have never read twelve books in all my life from cover to cover, not even in the days when I was attending school and college and law school. I have read parts of many, but not a dozen in their

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entirety. Yet if you were to talk to me about books of various kinds, it seems as though I know something about them. Probably I learn things like the Irishman learned to fiddle—by ear. I can get more from a lecture than I can get from a book. If book lovers think this is sacrilege I'm sorry."

Mayor A. Oakey Hall answered the charges of corruption brought against his administration with puns, just as Mayor Walker did with wisecracks. In his own newspaper, The New York Leader, which, incidentally, received all the official municipal advertising, Mayor Hall remarked: "Counts at Newport are at a discount. . . . Shocking levity—the light-ship off Savannah has gone astray," and "These warm, yet occasionally breezy days, with charmingly cool mornings and evenings, are an indication that we are likely to have what befell Adam—an early fall." Then, as the disclosures became more serious, and mass meetings were held, with one threat of lynching, Mayor Hall told reporters that he intended to issue his own reports of the condition of the city's finances, but they were unaccountably delayed until "next week." "Why not before?" a Herald reporter asked Oakey Hall. *"Festina lente,"* remarked the mayor with a smile.

A. Oakey Hall was tried twice for his thievery while mayor of New York. He rode to his first trial on horseback, fashionably and carefully dressed, challenged two jurors because they were older than he and finally escaped the first time because a juryman died in the course of the trial. At the second trial it was found impossible to connect the mayor directly with the plunder, though his friend Tweed had been put in jail, and many had testified that the mayor received his share of the 65 percent which every contractor added on to city bills and paid back to the Tweed ring. The jury retired on Christmas Eve, and Mayor Hall entertained the spectators in the courtroom by recalling that he had once written a book in the manner of Charles Dickens, called "The Christmas Juryman." The jury returned at ten o'clock at night with a verdict of not guilty. Oakey Hall bowed his head on the table in front of him, ostensibly overcome with emotion. Then he recovered himself and received the congratulations of his friends. As he left the courtroom, there were shouts of "Merry Christmas!" At the mayor's trial there was present in the courtroom what one newspaper described as "a horrid woman with her hair cut like a man's."

Mayor Hall refused to resign, although the newspapers clamored for his resignation, and he did not abandon his office until January 1, 1873, when his term was up, for he had failed of reëlection, since the public was aroused from its normal lethargy. When a reporter asked A. Oakey Hall whether a report in a newspaper that he was going to resign was true, this scene took place: "Sonny," said the mayor, taking the representative of the press by the hand in the most fatherly manner, and leading him to a corner of the office, "do you see that?" pointing to a certificate of the mayor's election. "Well, when I am going to resign, that will be taken down and a beautiful picture of 'Resignation,' which I saw this morning in Nassau Street, will appear in its place." A correspondent of the United Press in Miami Beach, Florida, interviewed Mrs. James J. Walker on April 6 last. "There has been talk of Jim being Governor some day," she said, "but I don't believe he will continue in politics after he's through as mayor of New York. There is too much trouble connected with the job."

M. R. WERNER.

# An Arkansas Farmer Speaks

MR. CONEY is a white tenant farmer who lives on the outskirts of the little town of England, Arkansas. He works a forty-one-acre farm and lives in an ill painted leaky shack with old newspapers pasted on the walls to keep out the wind. Cold air seeps up through the chinks between the rough planking of the floor. Except for a cheap print of the Last Supper, partially covered by an old cylinder gasket, and a geography and Bible on the mantelpiece, the interior of the house is bare and unprepossessing.

Like his house and the land about it, Mr. Coney himself is typical of the cotton region in which he lives. His life is in no wise different from that of his neighbors. Yet in the month of January of this year, Mr. Coney, aroused by the spectacle of hunger and poverty about him, by the refusal of the authorities to grant aid or to feed starving children, did something for which he will be remembered for many years by his fellow citizens in Lonoke County. For it was he who organized and led the now famous band of 500 Arkansas farmers who marched into the town demanding food for their families and threatening violence if it were not given to them. It is hardly necessary to describe the nation-wide publicity which this dramatic protest received, but I feel that it might be interesting to write down Mr. Coney's own report of the incident which he recently gave me when I visited him at his home. Moreover, I will try to repeat Mr. Coney's own words as accurately as I can, though there is a flavor and tang to his

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vernacular which it is extremely difficult to transcribe. Mr. Coney started his story by telling me what aroused him to make the protest.

"Well," he began, "here's how it happened. We all got pretty low on food out here, and some was a-starvin'. Mebbe I was a little better fixed than most, 'cause we still had some food left. But when a woman comes over to me a-cryin' and tells me her kids hain't et nothin' fer two days, and grabs me and says, 'Coney, what are we a-goin' to do?' then somethin' went up in my head. I jest says, 'Lady, you wait here. I'm a-goin' to get some food.' Then I cranks up my truck you see settin' over yonder, and takes my wife and rolls over to Bell's place. Bell's the feller them Red Cross guys picks to run the relief, but he never give out nothin'. He always tells 'em that he hain't got no blanks and they gotta wait.

"Well, I rolls over to Bell's place and finds a crowd of hungry men and Bell still a-sayin' that he hain't got no blanks. So I hollers out, 'All you that hain't yaller, climb on my truck. We're a-goin' into England to get some grub.' They all loads onto her—forty-seven clum on, and let me tell you there warn't a one among 'em that had a gun of any sort. 'Now then, when we gets to town,' I says, 'we'll ask for food quiet-like, and if they don't give it to us, we'll take it, also quiet-like.' I and another did all the talkin'. The gang jest kept silent. They was a right pathetic sight.

"When we gets into town we goes up to Chief Swain and then to the mayor and tells 'em that we hain't got no food. They both tells us to wait, and we go over in front of the grocery store. Afterwards I heerd that the feller who ran another store got excited and told his men that if the crowd busted in, to let the gang grab the stuff, but to save the cash register. Then he faints and is lugged upstairs. When he comes to, he hollers, 'I'll give a thousand dollars!'

"Out there in front of the grocery store mebbe 500 folks had collected. Lawyer Morris made up a talk and I must say that he was fair minded. He tells us to wait and he'll see that we get grub. While he was a-talkin' I busted in and asked him if it warn't true that Congress in Washington wanted to vote relief, but that the Red Cross says they would handle it and no folks would starve. I got that one out of The Kansas City Star, and Lawyer Morris had to agree it was true. Yes, sir, my gang stuck all right. I wouldn't a'taken 'em if I hadn't a'thought so. It wouldn't a'wanted but jest a little bit o' sass ter've had a showdown. But they doled out the feed and we all rolled back here without nobody gettin' hurt.

"You ask me how I'm fixed? Well, I'll tell you. I'm a-goin' to make a crop this year, if I have to graze one mule and plow with the other. I never did see such a season as last year. Why, last August I tried to hock that truck out there fer $25, which is less than the tires are worth. No takers. We hain't got enough clothes in this house to wad a shotgun proper. That pair o' rompers the kid's a-wearin' is the only clothes we bought in a year. That boy there is thirteen. He's the oldest, and we had to keep him from school to help with the plowin'. He's a right smart hand. All winter we've been a-feedin' on beans and a bit o' lard to kinda give it flavor. They're seven of us here, and fer a while we drawed $6 every two weeks from the Red Cross. Once we drawed $7. It was some job to squeeze through on that, I'm tellin' you. They've quit payin' and we only got food enough left fer four or five days. But these kids hain't a-goin' to starve while I'm loose. They may coop me up and then let 'em starve, but not with me around.

"I've been a-tryin' to borrer money for my crop this year. I pay $8 an acre fer corn and cotton to the landlord. He's a cotton broker who lives in Memphis. I tried to get his man out here to waive his claim fer last year, when we didn't get no crop at all, and then I might get the government loan. He tried to get me to sign the loan money over to him so's he could spend it fer me. Strikes me like they was tryin' to make us croppers keep the bankers. Now I'm tryin' to get $250 on the government loan, but they're slow about it.

"I don't know what's a-comin'. I hain't got no edjication to speak of, but I hain't yaller. I live right here on Route Two and if they want me they'll find me right here to home. Mebbe I'll be closed out next fall, but I tell you, I don't aim to leave a-runnin'. I notice one thing. This winter has done one good thing. The farmers are more sociable-like. Was a time when they would'a walked by you, without knowin' you was there. I think that three winters like this one would see them organized. I'll tell you that there's sure goin' to be somethin' tearin' loose 'round here some day."

LEMENT HARRIS.

# Russia Marches up a Mountain

I HAVE just been looking at the most interesting volume which has come to my attention in a year. Oh, well, let's be careful not to overstate, and make it eleven months. I say "looking at," and not "reading," because it is not a book to be read. It is Mr. Albert A. Johnson's collection of charts dealing with the past, present and future of Soviet Russia.

Mr. Johnson is an American economist, not, so he says, a Communist (he is a Republican, as a matter of fact), an indefatigable collector of information and an expert in the preparation of charts and graphs (though the actual execution, I believe, was done by Russian artists under his direction). He has made seven trips into Russia since the revolution of 1917, has traveled some 40,000 miles there, and has accumulated stores of facts. Every-

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thing depends, of course, upon the accuracy of his information, most of which was furnished by the Russian government, and especially, the Soviet State Economic Planning Commission. I have been assured from independent sources that Mr. Johnson has used his material correctly. As for the reliability of the Soviet's figures, I think there can be no question. The orientalism which is sometimes found in the Russian character does not extend to the point of self-deception about statistics. On the contrary, the very life of the country now depends upon knowing, as exactly as is humanly possible, just where they stand from week to week and month to month in regard to every important element in their national economy.

An economist of my acquaintance (I know all sorts of queer people) who looked over my shoulder at some of the pages of this book warned me against growing too excited over its contents merely because they were in chart form. Americans, he reminded me, have a passion for graphs and diagrams second only to that of the New Russians themselves, and after all, most of what Mr. Johnson has to say is already available in textual form, reported by other investigators. Doubtless this is true; I would only comment that after reading a large number of the recent books on Russia I found much that was new and extremely interesting in Mr. Johnson's collection; and that the mass effect of his charts gave a more overpowering picture of Russia's present life, and particularly of her struggle in the Five Year Plan, than I have received from any other book, or from all of them combined.

Almost the first thing in the book is a chart showing the composition of the government, from top to bottom, on a single page. It reveals how the Congress of Soviets expresses its will through the Central Executive Committee, how from this springs the Council of People's Commissars, and all the complicated machinery which hangs therefrom by way of the State Planning Commission, Council for Labor and Defense, and the Fulfilment Commission. On another page is the whole geographical, national and ethnographic composition of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, with its long list of the names of wild Asiatic peoples and its revelation as to the proportionate numbers of each in the U. S. S. R. . . . One of the most interesting of these charts, to me, is the one showing what proportion of the people is deprived of the right to vote, in cities and villages, and the proportion of the total which is disfranchised for each of several reasons. In the cities, those who are stricken from the list are twice as numerous as in the villages; and even in the cities, they are only one-seventh of those who, in our own United States, are eligible to vote but refrain from doing so. In the villages one-half, in the cities one-third, of those deprived of citizenship are in that category only because they are financially dependent upon someone else who belongs to one of the proscribed classes: those living on unearned income, tradesmen and middlemen, the clergy, former members of the Tsarist police force, employers of labor, the insane, and those deprived of citizenship by court action.

Another chart shows the participation of the population in elections, 1922-29. The cities began with one-third of the eligible voters using their privilege, and have increased steadily to more than two-thirds. The villages began with one-fifth, and have reached three-fifths. But certain occupational groups reach a higher average level: soldiers and trade-union members in cities, for example, both score about 80 percent, which is 30 percent better than the normal record in recent national elections in the United States. A striking group of diagrams shows the increasing participation of women in the government, both as voters and as elected officials—a steep stair-flight from 1922 up to 1929. Another page shows, in one diagram, the birth and death rates (and, of course, the annual rate of increase) for Russia from 1911 to 1928, inclusive. With a birth rate only 8 percent smaller than in the Tsar's day, the death rate is now less than two-thirds of what it then was, and the result is the amazing increase of twenty-four per thousand persons per annum.

The book's chief interest, however, naturally lies in the charts, making up the bulk of its contents, which deal with the Five Year Plan. I am well aware of the reservations which must be remembered in looking at them. I know that certain figures of accomplishment must be discounted for the inferior quality of the goods produced. I know that in regard to nearly every aspect of industry Russia will still be far behind the United States if the Five Year Plan is successfully completed—that she faces perhaps a quarter of a century of successive plans. I am well aware how little truth there is in the notion that the U. S. S. R. is now preparing vast quantities of goods for export, with which she will flood the world's markets and "destroy capitalist civilization"—as if that civilization weren't already doing quite enough to destroy itself! Even with all proper cautions and exceptions carefully noted, I still find this graphic picture of Russia's material progress tremendously exciting.

Mr. Johnson has described the various parts of the Five Year Plan separately and in some detail, in charts dealing with agriculture, railway development, oil production, light and heavy industry, capital investment, and so on. Most of these charts are written with the passage of time marked from left to right, and quantities in the vertical distance from the base. They begin with 1913, the last year before the War, and continue through 1933, the final year of the Plan. The quantities for 1931, '32 and '33 are of course the quotas set; for 1929 and '30, quotas and accomplishment are shown.

A typical chart starts at the left, at a point perhaps one-third of the distance from the bottom, and proceeds to swoop downward almost to zero during

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the war years and the succeeding period of economic prostration, while the west European countries and America were trying to starve out the U. S. S. R. and were subsidizing the various invasions by White armies. The curve turns upward again, in most cases, with 1923 or '24. From there until 1928 there is a fairly steep climb, but a Buick could take it in high. Then, in every case, there is a mountainside, rising with dizzy abruptness until it towers, in 1933, far above everything else on the page. This is, of course, only a quota, a task set. It may never be reached; in some cases the chances are that it will not, though in others it has already been reached and passed, and in still others, the 1933 goal has been pushed ahead one year, to 1932. But surely the most audacious act in human history was that of the men who, on behalf of the Russian government, first sketched out those charts.

I can see in my mind's eye the operation of making one of them. A big, sparsely furnished room in what was once a palace, in Moscow; a group of tired-faced men seated, late at night, around a long table littered with papers, speckled with empty tea glasses and cigarette stubs. At one end of the table stands a blackboard, marked off in horizontal and vertical scales, with the chart drawn upon it in chalk up through all but the last two years. After interminable conversation, ebullient enthusiasm, passionate despair, one man picks up the chalk and advances to the board. On tiptoe, he reaches above his head and finishes the line. Then he turns back to his fellow experts, dusting the chalk from his fingers. He looks silently at them and they at him, knowing full well how much desperately hard labor by millions of people, how much zealous deprivation will be necessary if the nation is at last to stand on tiptoe also and put its chalk mark beside his.

Very likely this is just my romantic bourgeois nonsense, and it was not like that at all. But my other picture I know is true.

I see a nation, the most numerous in the world, a nation occupying one-sixth of the earth's land area, whose capital city is nearer to New York than to its own easternmost reaches, marching across a chart from left to right. It has come through the frightful misery of the valley which stretches from the beginning of the War well into the third decade of the century; it has struggled at great cost up the lesser slope of, say, 1923 to 1928; it has scrambled up the heights of 1929 and 1930; and now, breathless but thus far triumphant, it stands looking up at the mountain which lies ahead. It is possibly true that some of the countries which were sorest hurt in the Great War have managed to get up an acclivity as steep as that which Russia has lately surmounted; but certainly no nation since the world began has ever attempted any such feat as that which lies ahead. It is Mr. Johnson's achievement that he shows you this vast army marching, and thrills you with it, in a book which contains only a single page of prose. BRUCE BLIVEN.

# Washington Notes

*A Billion in the Red—Making Hoover the Goat—Democratic Help—Raising Taxes—Mellon and Posterity*

EVERY time Mr. Hoover has a conference with his Treasury officials the furrows deepen in the presidential brow and the White House optimism about the political future, pumped up by the "Happiness Boys"—Roy Benjamin and Jimmie Burke—is reduced to the vanishing point. Nor do I blame him. The more you consider the condition of the federal finances the more heavily they seem to handicap Hoover's campaign. Last January the august Mr. Mellon, who is nothing like so glamorous now as he was two years ago, forecast a Treasury deficit of $375,000,000. Month by month this estimate has been revised upward until a week ago the Department announced a deficit, as of May 8, of $936,342,392. From sources that have always proved reliable, I have learned that by the end of the fiscal year, June 30, the deficit will be closer to a billion and a half than a billion.

The figure is almost incredible. The contrast with the huge surpluses of the past seven years is startling indeed, and it is no wonder the unfortunate Mr. Hoover is depressed when he reflects upon them. If there were nothing else to do so, such an extraordinary and unprecedented deficit would certainly put the party on the defensive from start to finish of the campaign. It is useless to explain that it exists through no fault of the "Chief," that it is a combination of business depression, bonus loans, Farm Board appropriations and congressional extravagance. The one fact that sinks into the popular mind is that here is a deficit greater than the whole cost of the government a few years ago and that there was no deficit when Hoover came in. The political psychological effect is bad. It presents a point of attack by the opposition which can be effectively battered. It is a distinct liability, even though it is not accompanied by an increase in taxes.

The prospect that the deficit may approximate a billion and a half greatly diminishes administration hopes of keeping the next session of Congress from raising the rates at the very threshold of the presidential campaign. It accentuates the arguments of the progressives and lessens the force of the contention that the situation can be adequately handled by the Treasury without recourse to additional taxation. If the figure could have been kept under a billion, I think Mr. Hoover could probably have gotten by without the raise. With the government a billion and a half in the red by July 1, and the certainty of an additional deficit increase for the year 1932, I doubt very much if it can be avoided, even with the help of Democrats like Senator Harrison of Mississippi, who, it will be recalled, some weeks ago issued a statement in which he expressed an opposition to any increase.

To my mind this is a silly position for the Democrats to take. The idea back of it, of course, is that the party does not want to accept responsibility for raising taxes in the next campaign. The answer to this is that they would not have to. Justly or not, the increase, like the deficit, will be blamed on the administration. The public mentality is

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such that it does not reason or analyze about these things. It gets one general idea and sticks to it. It will blame Hoover for everything, from the stock-market crash to the drought. It will blame him for the deficit and for the increase in taxes, as Mr. Hoover realizes. That is the chief reason these Treasury figures give him and all the White House political aides, advisers, counselors and consolers sick headaches when they consider them.

The way Hoover's political managers argue the case is interesting. What originally gave Mr. Coolidge the press support that meant so much to him, they contend, was his advocacy of the so-called Mellon plan, whereby taxes were reduced on the high-bracket income-tax payers and the corporations. As I have repeatedly said in this connection, so anxious were the newspapers to get this reduction plan through that while it was pending they dared not even so much as hint that Mr. Daugherty, then still Attorney General, was not an ornament to the federal service, lest in some way they would impair Coolidge's influence and the prospects of the bill. Now, it is argued that if Mr. Hoover, in the face of a heavy deficit, can successfully resist the efforts of a Congress led by the progressive group to restore the high rates on the big incomes, the large financial figures who shudder at the idea, and the great newspapers of the East controlled or owned by gentlemen whom the rates most affect, will feel correspondingly grateful and give him the same sort of support they gave Coolidge.

So runs their argument and it is the theory upon which the administration fight will be made. It may or it may not be sound, but under the circumstances it is hard to see exactly why the Democrats should help Hoover attain his objective. On the contrary, you might suppose that the Democratic policy would be to join the progressive group in raising rates on the large incomes and also in increasing the inheritance tax. There are, it seems to me, two reasons why this would be sound Democratic strategy. The first is that it happens to be reasonable and just. And the second is that if the rates are raised, Hoover and not the opposition will be blamed. The newspaper multi-millionaires and others are sure to regard it as almost criminal weakness on the part of Hoover's administration not to have prevented it.

While I am on this dull but vital subject of federal finance, deficit and taxes, it seems timely to mention again the practically complete disappearance of Mellon's prestige. What a mistake that old gentleman made when he so ardently expressed the desire to Mr. Hoover to continue in his position as Secretary of the Treasury! Little as he deserved the title, he probably would have gone down in history as a great Secretary of the Treasury—if only he had possessed enough good judgment to retire two years ago. Now he is just an aged office holder who has overstayed his time. Instead of having his name associated with surpluses, tax reduction, debt reduction and skillful management of governmental finance, he is doomed, I think, to be known to this and future generations as the Secretary of the Treasury under whom the country had its biggest deficit and worst business depression.

After all, this deficit is the startling and outstanding fact of this administration. It is true that it is not Mr. Mellon's fault, but then neither were those surpluses of the Coolidge-Harding regime his fault. He accepted with typical Republican smugness the credit for the one—he will have to take credit for the other. An unreasoning and undiscriminating public will remember the stupendous Hoover-Mellon deficit long after it has forgotten every other Treasury fact of the past ten years. Moreover, I do not blame the public. Apportion the responsibility as you will, there it stands—vast, unprecedented and disturbing. The old gentleman made a mistake—he should have gone when the going was good.

T. R. B.

Washington.

# Indicative Portraits

### Sweets to the Sweet

M—— IS A Boston architect, practising his profession there, tightened with certain inherent reservations about life, tinged with some hunger that makes him give a bell now and then to some village in Umbria, or draw up plans free of charge when some New England college is renovating its chapel. He would perhaps have been a saint but for the fact that there was no money in it and he was not good enough. As an architect he has been very successful in a scrupulous, empty way. His houses lack everything offensive, even taste to any sharp degree, but they please the older rich families, who desire the unobtrusive; and he manages to make building very expensive. In the midst of his busy, gossipy season, the love of his life is Italy. His tall, thin, awkward form bends with a curious and gentle line when he leans over to tell you something from his days in Prato or Assisi, or describes some beautiful thing or remembered scene there; and the tea-party, pattery rhythm of his speech quiets when he is speaking thus. Lately, however, his trips to Italy are fewer, his autumn months have become more pedestrian, somewhere in the Catskills and around Lake George; he is cross with Italy.

M——, in sum, does not approve of the Italian trend as he sees it taking shape these past few years. The Italians, he says, have always been a poetic people, given to beauty and art and to the graces of living. He used to make all his short railway journeys by the third class so that he might hear the *contadini* talk, see them piling in and out, kissing each other at the stations, where there might be, as likely as not, yellow satin curtains to the windows and one could never say what other impractical grandeur, and where the *capo di stazione* in his gold braid and paraphernalia must have been nothing less than a general. M—— is not a fool, and he can tell you exactly what he means. He means this new organization in Italy, this discretion and lack of noise and freedom, this disappearance of individuality from *paese* to *paese*, city to city. Fundamentally it is most of all the industrialization that he blames. He wants Italy to be simple and lovely, as her nature is, among the grabbing and mechanical nations around her. He wants the Italians still to be characters stepping out of Callot, gentle dreamers such as Fra Angelico once painted, crabbed old signori and burghers that you will see in the

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Florentines like Ghirlandaio, noble solitary stylists that seem to revive out of Bronzino or Tintoretto, salty wits like Machiavelli; he would have it always true of them what Leonardo had felt when he wrote in his notebook, "How sweet are the people's faces in the streets!" Let the Italians remain themselves, let them not try to compete. In some way we may have faith that they will survive.

These sentiments trouble M——'s spirit at home, and if I visit him, we talk of Italian matters, after dinner in the evening by the fire, perhaps—he lives in magnificent comfort and order, though not showily of course. A call or so on the telephone may come from the wives of his clients while we talk of Italy; and next morning M—— will be enviably at his work for these bankers and manufacturers, star clients and star capitalists, who think that if, for example, the Mexicans will not coöperate properly with our business schemes, the Mexicans should be shot.

### Impressing H——

From our very first meeting in the salon for coffee after lunch or dinner, I began observing H—— with regard to the Italian boat on which we traveled. I had a feeling that his reaction could be predicted, and that it had a racial implication in it as to the Italians, or at least the approach of certain members of our northern race to the Italians.

As to the Ginori china, thin and transparent, costly, the craft of its decoration so expert, as to the linen sheets, the superfine stationery and so on, of the "Augustus," it may be that H—— never noticed them. It may be, on the other hand, that he is used to such luxury at home in America. We will let it pass, just as we will let pass the long list of the menu at every meal, for he may have the habit of endless choices in his food, at least in expensive restaurants—I judge from H——'s manner that he is used to buying anything that he can imagine wanting. But as to the service and the general spirit on the boat, that is another matter. I observed that the willingness on every hand, the generosity and abundance, the almost excessive ease, the unfailing attendance, meant nothing to him. You could order anything you wanted to eat, you could ring at all times for the most arbitrary reasons and desires, you could follow your whims as if nobody could ever think them odd or a whit autocratic.

H—— liked the boat and that was about all there was to it. I used to think this out, sometimes much puzzled. What would have impressed such a fellow citizen as this of mine, accustomed to a good share of the world's sophistication and the world's goods, was not this flexible and intelligent willingness and hidden grace, this inexhaustible hospitality, so simply conveyed, or this easy consideration. What would have impressed H—— would have been, for example, a restaurant on board where if you wanted something special to eat, you could go and could pay for it. He would have liked to feel a certain rudeness or impertinence—such, for instance, as he finds in his favorite Paris hotel—soluble with a good tip. Or, shall we say, he needed to run into some rule now and then that obstructed him, some patent line of logic. Or he needed the feeling of some dense impermeability of mind or method—Britons never shall be slaves—or to be firmly snubbed, somehow or other, by the ship's administration. At any rate, I still, remember that look and tone, not unpleasant but definite enough, with which he turned to me one day when we were walking on the deck, at the sight of the sign—so contrary to that on the boats of diverse other nations whose ships he had known—which read, "Passengers are invited to visit the bridge from ten to four."

"How charming!" was what H—— said, in a tone that implied these quaint little people. The fact that the ship worked like a clock, with never a hitch in the least detail, slipped past him.

H—— had been endowed before sailing with various letters of introduction in Italian society. A number of princes, marcheses or counts, or ladies of like rank, would follow up the presentation of these letters with hospitable gestures. I knew exactly how it would be. In various palaces or villas in Rome or Florence, shall we say, H—— would be dining or at luncheon, or present at some evening party, places some of them that I know; and the story of the "Augustus," on a higher plane if you like, would merely repeat itself. Not long since I came upon him on the Paris-Rome Express as I journeyed to Milan. He told me of his weeks in Italy.

One of these visits that H—— made I can picture very well, since I have known the host of this house for a long time, a prince with a name as old as the Ponte Vecchio and with an old palace near Santa Croce. This occasion will do for them all and this picture for the picture of H——'s mind in general as he encountered Italian social life.

H—— presented his letter; the prince invited him to dinner. It may as well as not have been informal, dinner jackets, and on the evening of that very same day. There would be the family plus a cousin or so, come in to dinner, and after dinner the prince might take H—— into his study to see the model of the little yacht lately visited off Rimini, where there was also one of the family country villas. He would be explaining, perhaps, that the room was in a little disorder with all the books, French, English and American, sent by the bookseller during his absence on the yacht. Afterwards they might look at some of the new books—it might be that on Italian paintings in America, with nearly two thousand illustrations—coffee meanwhile coming in; and with the cups in their hands, they would go into a fourth salon, where on the walls hung the series of curious eighteenth-century paintings, a kind of genre painting, religious pictures done as if pasted to a wooded panel on which were shown surrounding objects, still lifes. And in a narrow sort of file room, files on files of papers and music, there was an amusing bookcase, just delivered from the *bottega,* a sort of *chinoiserie* in lacquer, that showed at least the amount of skill remaining among the little Florentine craftsmen. A little later friends might be dropping in, in one corner bridge would begin, and in the rest of the room the conversation, shifting among three languages, would go on—naturalness, wits, irony, responsiveness, kindliness, tart tongues, intelligent eyes. Nice people H—— thought, and has come on north, and that is about all there is to it.

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### Lady with Her Foot Out

In the Piazza Esquilino, not far ahead of us, a lady also is waiting for the car. She has her back to us, and my friend, literary critic and essayist, can therefore smile as he looks at her.

This lady is a sight that one might see only on the Continent, and indeed only in Italy. Naturally she is short and squarish-plump or heavy, rather than merrily fat. Her arms at the shoulder look rather like legs, and her legs from the knee down are one solid mass, more expressionless than huge, but big enough at that. Her face, from the glance I had of it, is airy and pouched, with fiery black around the eyes. Her dress is purple satin, with two strings of beads, and a fur collar that looks as if she and her mother had gone out and shot a dog and together, at home, had made a square of it. The point, however, that my friend thinks so absurd in all this dramatic allure and handsomeness that the lady is assuming, is the way in which that short, thick foot in its badly built, patent-leather slipper, is so gracefully disposed to the side, the point of it draped, as it were, lightly on the pavement.

But he is wrong to be so intolerant of these flourishes, though it is true enough, as he says, that this is the sort of thing you would never see in America. It would be laughed into hopeless silliness. But what does that prove? Without this humorless extra flourish in the race, this abundance, this intention of ornate development or conscious style, we might not have had that water plunging through the seclusion of the court in the Borghese Palace, amid those whirling baroque gestures of the marble figures there. And what of that balustrade at the Villa Babianello: among the trees those forms so fanciful, rococco and rich, bordering the garden, running along above the water, above the statues that look out across Lake Como, or bless the passing boatmen? And so on and so on throughout Italy, innumerable rich flourishes of a rich endowment. All things have their echoes and by-products. All excellences have the defects of themselves. You cannot have only what you choose, with no price anywhere to be paid for it.

Stark Young.

# Aaron Copland's Growth

IT IS NOW possible to perceive Aaron Copland in the glorious company of the composers. This is anything but the first occasion on which the Brooklyn Stravinsky has figured as a musician. For all their Frenchiness and post-war indirection, even the earliest of his pieces exhibited his native reference to the medium of tone. The stony sonority of the music was individual, the cocky thematic material homogeneous and original, the lean grandiosity of the structures entirely inventive. Every page of his bore witness to a fine sense of materials and a capacity to grasp them in terms of the plastic problem. None the less, Copland loomed only as an "American composer," a very partial value. Or as a "modern composer," a more general and still partial value. Only recently has he begun to appear a very general one.

The figure he cuts among those of the men who have communicated the world-order, the completeness of things, through tone, is anything but large. Its superficial extent is not heroic. Its substance is not rich. One guesses that the susceptibility of the shape in the steel-colored coat to the infinite vibrations is anything but liberal and complete. Relatively rigid, gaunt and ashen by the side of so much amplitude, opulence and incandescence, Copland's figure does not even make an immediate promise of vast future developments. But it is distinct, holding its own in a spot attained as yet by no coeval American musicianship, and by very few from out the older generations. And the intensity and concentration apparent in its lineaments affirm its ability to maintain itself in the place it has gained, bringing to effectiveness every least grain of its perfectly authentic material.

The occasion of this very gratifying graduation was the performance by the composer of his latest work, the "Theme and Variations for Pianoforte," at one of the dismal Sunday-afternoon sessions of the League of Composers. The piece flared through the gloom, and subsequently flashed through other sadnesses. Technically one of Copland's most successful works, perhaps his completest; of all, most bare of his old faults, initial reticence of impulse and overuse of material, it is no less a culmination than a new departure. The variations are characteristically architectural, minimally dramatic or literary or graphic, essentially the modifications and final resolution of a typically projective four-note theme through eighteen dissonant harmonic treatments. Flinty, lithic, *martellato,* the sonority has the severity found in all Copland's post-jazz-age music, particularly in trio and second piece for string quartette. This work, for example, is all iron, all metal, all stone. The style is grand, unbroken by either the graceless tunes and twitterings with which Copland's older music made the sign of the thumb and nose, addressing the world to the devil; or by their complementary soft and nostalgic phrases. In a sense, the "Variations" are the austere expression at which the composer began aiming while writing the last movement of his little symphony. None the less, they stand well apart from their predecessors, ultimately part of another order of things.

One feels it in their relative quietness, their bareness of the violent rhythms which churned the "Concerto" and the other pieces hitherto representative of Copland. They are dignified, effortless, contained. There is a new silvery beauty in their angular questioning, repining, stoical little figures, now cursive and now subdued; a jewelry of the steel age; something grim and still rich and noble. Above all, they are quite uncharacteristically stimulating to the imagination and infectious with meaning. How uncharacteristically, one can see by comparing them, not with the "Concerto"; for between two pieces five years apart in production the differences would necessarily be great; but with the piece of Copland's immediately preceding it and most closely related to it: the "Symphonic Ode" to be presented by the Boston Symphony here this fall.

A startling number of traits collate this orchestral composition with the "Variations." It is an ambitious performance, couched in the grand style, severe, full of Copland's almost painful tensity and subtle, almost secret reso-

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lutions of that painful strain. It, too, is the development of a projective four-note theme, shrill as the crow of a metallic rooster; the five little movements or divisions conserving and expanding the frugal material, in buoyant, contemplative, scherzando and jazzy metamorphoses, and bringing it to a grandiose completion. Yet for all its austere grandeur, naked and vaulting as the span of a bridge, the "Ode" somehow leaves us on the hither side of complete release. Struggle obtrudes; the substance is a little thin; and if the music does put us in touch with the restless, wildly speeded up, inhuman side of modern city life, it does so without special magic and profundity.

But in the "Theme and Variations," nothing interposes itself between us and life. The contact is complete. From the initial bars of the music something unbrokenly touches us. The composition sings, we say, sensible of a quality of magnificence, logic, necessity, in the flinty resonances, the steely harmonies; satisfied by the sequence of the living pianistic volumes; and always aware of two things: the sheer entertainment of the manipulations of sound, and the reality close and open to us "behind" them. Among these half-bitterly, brokenly questioning, half-stoically affirming phrases, we find ourselves in a badly shattered world, fragmentary, without cohesion. There is no fusion, no relation in it; nothing save cells damned to isolation and the pangs of the fragmentary, the separated, the eternally adrift; and the rigid revolutions of machinery unable to break its form and merge with living things. Yet some painful mobilization of energies is under way, gathering intensity, finally through much wrestling and travail bringing themselves into harmony and union with things as they are. Out of the shards and cinders a new world is born, floating white, scarcely negotiable, but complete as the great octaves that gather and resolve the sonorous volumes sped toward them. For as this piece is the achievement of the style at which the composer has been aiming during several years, it sings the song of all his compositions, even the caricatural ones with their blended pathos and burlesque; but with the singleness, the freedom, the synthesis of many faculties, that constitute "objectivity."

It stands with great music; and Copland figures among transmitters. The event actually confronting us here is the development of a potentiality into a force. There has been a realization, in the good old Aristotelian sense. A musicianship is no longer in germ or in *posse,* but in life or in *esse*. An acquired habit of composition has become an exercise of that habit; one who has been learning to sing is now singing. We know it is the quality of forces to be lively, to awaken our imaginations and bring home to us meanings, experiences, pictures; to make things comprehensible within a certain scope; to define themselves among the other forces in the field. What the cause of this emergence is, what has happened to make the potential thing once described as "an American composer" or "a modern composer," swell to the point where these qualifications are no longer adequate, is surely obscure, and possibly incomprehensible. To call it "life" is not particularly satisfactory. But we cannot complain; we who in these very leaden days have seen the beautiful phenomenon again; and in process, as it were, underneath our very eyes.

PAUL ROSENFELD.

# *CORRESPONDENCE*

## The Communists and the Scottsboro Case

SIR: May we comment on your editorial on the Communists and the Scottsboro case, in The New Republic of May 13, which seems to assume as correct certain statements broadcast by the Communists themselves? Among these statements is the claim that they were first in the field. While the matter of priority is not of supreme importance, it should be stated as a matter of record that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People took up these cases at their very inception, offered help at its nearest branch at Chattanooga and to the Interdenominational Ministers' Alliance of Chattanooga, which retained counsel. It was chiefly through this action that there is in the transcript of record the basis for appeal.

More recently the association's secretary, Walter White, went to Chattanooga, Montgomery and Kilby Prison, where he spoke with the condemned boys. Four of them have asked to be defended by the N. A. A. C. P., two of them expressed the wish subject to the consent of their parents, and the remaining two were undecided.

Your editorial speaks of a "quarrel" between "the radicals and all the rest," among whom it may be presumed you include the N. A. A. C. P. The N. A. A. C. P. has not taken part in any quarrel. It has not even replied to the campaign of vilification and misrepresentation against it launched by the Communists, except to say that the N. A. A. C. P. could not in any way be associated with the Communist tactics or their defense of the boys.

Public sentiment in Alabama is tense. The N. A. A. C. P. in a long and successful record of defending colored people, which includes victories of primary importance before the United States Supreme Court, has learned that such cases must be won not in newspapers but in courts of law. The N. A. A. C. P. feels that the tactics of the Communists have already gravely inflamed sentiment in Alabama and have intensified the difficulty of saving the eight condemned boys. The N. A. A. C. P. has the assurance of probably the best criminal lawyer in Alabama that he will conduct the defense if the N. A. A. C. P. is given charge of the cases. The association is prepared to associate with him eminent outside counsel, if that should be advisable. In any case, the briefs and other documents will be carefully gone over by the volunteer counsel on the Association's National Legal Committee and by Mr. Nathan Margold, recently retained for special legal work. In the light of this situation your question to the Communists, as to whether they are interested enough in the fate of the boys to withdraw when there is assurance that the defense will be adequately conducted by others, becomes especially pertinent. Propaganda cannot save the boys' lives; and saving them is now the paramount task.

HERBERT J. SELIGMANN, Director of Publicity, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

New York City.

## A Correction

SIR: There is a rather unfortunate typographical error beginning with the fourth line of the third paragraph of my letter "Breeding War" in the issue of May 13th. It is unfortunate because it involves an exceedingly important constitutional point which the War Policies Commission must answer if it wishes to pay any attention to the resolution under which it came into existence. It should read, beginning with the third line . . . "the resolution (joint resolution to promote peace and to equalize the burdens and to minimize the profits of war) could only mean the taking of private property in time of war without or with something less than what the courts have considered 'just compensation.'"

SEYMOUR WALDMAN, Associate Secretary, National Council for the Prevention of War.

Washington, D. C.

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## "To Yell with Hale"

SIR: We note in your issue of May 13, in an article by Mr. W. H. Hale, the boy-liberal from one of the Connecticut colleges, the following reference to The Hound and Horn:

> At Harvard, no progressive magazine has appeared since the now rather flopping Hound and Horn.

"Flopping" in what way?

In the last two of its four years of existence, The Hound and Horn has numbered among its contributors, Paul Valéry, Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, S. Foster Damon, Conrad Aiken, Allen Tate, Yvor Winters, Kay Boyle, Katherine Anne Porter, Serge Eisenstein, Russell-Hitchcock, etc., etc.

The circulation of The Hound and Horn has tripled since its first year, and continues to increase at a gratifyingly regular rate. Its advertising also shows a steady increase.

Furthermore, the format has been enlarged, and the number of pages increased. Its interests have broadened to the scope of an international review.

LINCOLN KIRSTEIN.

New York City.

## The Journal of Commerce and the Chains

SIR: In the article entitled "Do the Chains Undersell?" by John T. Flynn, published in your issue of April 29, the fourth and fifth sentences of the fourth paragraph read as follows:

> This study was made at the instance of a daily business publication which is actively committed to the cause of the wholesale grocer. I do not say that Dr. Alexander did not proceed with perfect honesty in his study, but these surveys sponsored by interested or convinced parties have a way of coming out right and proving what the interested party is interested in having proved.

I was editor of the food department of The Journal of Commerce at the time Professor Alexander's study was made and so I should like to set your readers right on these two matters. For years I had felt that the trade controversy about the difference between prices in chain and individually owned grocery stores had been characterized by prejudice, exaggeration and ignorance, and I had sought something definite, accurate and impartial. When I expressed some skepticism about a series of articles, published by The Wall Street Journal, in April, 1928, showing the comparative saving at chain stores to be 20.22 percent, for which the data were supplied by the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company, the assistant to the president of that company suggested that I should go out and make my own investigation. I thought that was good advice and took him at his word.

I persuaded The Journal of Commerce to engage Professor Alexander to make the survey, which showed

> that the average price of these fifty products in the chain stores covered in our survey is 4.6 cents on the dollar higher than the average price of the same products in the independent stores visited. That the chain stores, by the average-percentage method of comparison, have a 2.64 percent advantage over the independent. Our final conclusion, then, is that, for the products included in our list and in the stores from which we obtained quotations, the chain stores enjoy a slight advantage in prices amounting to somewhat less than 3 percent, although in the case of articles of high unit value this advantage is very materially reduced.

The Journal of Commerce published in full the survey by Professor Edgar Z. Palmer, associate professor of Economics of the University of Kentucky, showing, without allowance for the differences in services rendered, that prices in chain stores in Lexington were 14.3 percent below those in independent stores. It also published extensive accounts of the surveys by Professor Malcolm D. Taylor of the University of North Carolina, showing a saving at chain stores in Durham of 13.79 percent; and by Professor James L. Palmer, professor of Marketing of the University of Chicago, showing that, on seventy-five items, chain stores in Chicago were underselling independent merchants by at least 10 percent.

I have been thanked by the secretary and president of the National Chain Store Association for my favorable treatment, both in news columns and in editorials, of chain stores in The Journal of Commerce. Mr. Flynn, himself, has told me that I have been too rough upon the independents. If all this means being "actively committed to the cause of the wholesale grocer," that activity must be hardly enough to be recorded by any scientific instrument yet devised.

As for the implication that the survey was made to come out as interested or convinced parties wanted it, The Journal of Commerce only financed the undertaking and published the findings. I was interested only in getting facts. I was not convinced beforehand, and I am not yet, of the settlement of the controversy between chains and independents. My opinion merely inclines toward the greater efficiency on the part of the chains. No restrictions whatever were even suggested to Professor Alexander, and no one but himself knew of the results until they were sent to the paper for publication.

HUGH M. FOSTER.

New York City.

## Careers in Dixie

SIR: Your editorial entitled "A Career Open to Talent," in the issue of May 6, I have found to be most interesting, and in view of the fact that you have not yet reviewed the symposium "I'll Take My Stand: The South and the Agrarian Tradition" (which my host, Allen Tate, has let me read), I have pondered with some perplexity your closing sentence: "Eventually they [men of letters] may come to play the part in society that was played by the politicians and orators of a vanished South." This Southern symposium supports your belief that writers may come to have the sense of social responsibility that the politicians have lost, and I am therefore puzzled at your failure to use that book to point your moral. "I'll Take My Stand" is necessarily incomplete and in some ways fragmentary, but it contains the only coherent political doctrine the South has produced since the Reconstruction, and I think it is significant that there is not a politician among its contributors. I am sure you will find it so.

PEREGRINE PICKLE.

Clarksville, Tenn.

## The Sixth Seminar in Mexico

SIR: The Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America, Professor Edward Alsworth Ross, chairman, announces that the Sixth Annual Session of the Seminar in Mexico will be held in Mexico City, July 4-24, 1931. Membership in this "coöperative study of the life and culture of the Mexican people" will again be open to a representative group of North Americans.

Among the leaders of round tables for the Sixth Seminar are Judge Florence Allen of the supreme court of Ohio; Mr. Carleton Beals, author of "Mexico: An Interpretation," etc.; Professor Charles W. Hackett of the University of Texas; Dr. Samuel Guy Inman, author of many books on Latin America; Dr. Eyler Simpson of the Institute of Current World Affairs; Dr. Frank Tannenbaum, author of "The Mexican Agrarian Revolution"; Reverend R. A. McGowan of the National Catholic Welfare Conference; and Mr. Morris Topchevsky.

The previous Seminars in Mexico have been attended by over 400 men and women, widely representative of many public groups in the United States. Numerous field trips are included in the Seminar programs. There are also optional trips for small groups to parts of Mexico and to Nicaragua, which will be taken after the regular sessions of the Seminar close.

A pamphlet describing the program of the Seminar may be obtained from Hubert C. Herring, Executive Director of the Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America, 112 East Nineteenth Street, New York City.

HUBERT C. HERRING,
Executive Director.

New York City.

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# Humanizing Art

*Men of Art, by Thomas Craven. New York: Simon and Schuster. 524 pages. $3.75.*

MR. CRAVEN writes with indignation; and that emotion has its good and bad points as the motive power behind a typewriter. It has goaded him to a red-hot fever of partisanship, in which he writes with glowing enthusiasm for what he likes, and with bitter contempt for what he hates. The result is a book that is dynamic, exciting as well as excited, utterly biased, one-sided, arbitrary, pugnacious, never moderate or calmly judicious; and, for these very qualities, a highly entertaining and stimulating book.

What does Mr. Craven hate? "Modern art," with its tendency to distortion and abstraction. The critics who analyze it and praise it. The millionaires who buy it. The scheming foreigners, especially Frenchmen, who make and sell it. The young Americans who imitate it. The nudes, the apples and other deplorably French subjects which it loves to represent. Every old master, and every element in his work, that resembles modern abstractionism—in fact, everything connected with the abominable stuff.

I have no wish to defend the extreme view which Mr. Craven so violently caricatures and attacks—the view that "pure form" is the only element of value in a painting, or that subject matter with associated human meanings should be entirely ignored. I believe that both these elements are valuable in painting, and in no way inconsistent. In "Men of Art," Mr. Craven has done useful work in interpreting the second of these elements, the associated values, to which he happens to be particularly sensitive. But this positive achievement is marred, I believe, by his narrow intolerance toward the other type—the enjoyment of design for its own sake, as in Persian rugs and Gothic windows; as in cathedrals and in symphonies. To this kind of enjoyment Mr. Craven happens to be less sensitive. Instead of letting those like it who can, he goes to great lengths in denouncing it, with an almost Puritanical moralism, as "trivial," "futile," "sensual" and "materialistic."

As for critical method, Mr. Craven approaches art by trying to relate it to the lives and backgrounds of artists. Again, this is one good way to write about art. Certainly it is a popular way, in this age of sociology and of psychoanalytic biography. But Mr. Craven is wrong in thinking it to be the only way. In other fields it has been absurdly overworked as a universal mode of explanation, and a reaction against it has long been manifest. To illustrate: through studying the sex life (if any) of Euclid or of Kant, we may perhaps learn a few interesting facts about the origin of their theories. But that is not the only way to study geometry and philosophy. In art as well, it is sometimes worth while to forget about the "full and robust background" of the age, and to look directly at a work of art for what it is.

What positive results does Mr. Craven accomplish by his chosen method? In planning "Men of Art," he set out to do a certain job, and he has done that particular job fairly well. This was to write, not a history of art, a manual of appreciation or a theory of esthetics, but a series of biographical sketches, a new popular successor to Vasari's "Lives of the Painters" and, in another field, to Durant's "The Story of Philosophy." He has combed the records for colorful anecdotes about a selected list of artists, their patrons, enemies and mistresses. These make interesting reading, and he has retold them with a pleasant gusto, in a brisk and lively style. He makes the reader sense the romance, or the struggle and drudgery, of being a painter. He suggests each personality vividly, if not always justly, from the calm and mercenary hack to the visionary mystic. But there is one central fallacy in each of these sketches, and that is due, as usual, to Mr. Craven's particular blind spot: to his inability to sympathize with the intrinsic fascination of composing and observing visual forms. To him "there is no such thing as the intrinsic value of color," or of lines and masses, apart from what they represent. He has made it appear that most of these artists agree with him, by the simple process of ignoring mountains of evidence to the contrary, in their letters and diaries, in their contemporary biographies and especially in their paintings. The result, in most cases, is as distorted as would be a life of Bach which omitted all mention of his interest in abstract tone-relations, melodies and fugues.

Does the book succeed in relating these men's art to their lives and environments? To do so would be an important achievement, for—repugnant as it seems to the sociological mind—there is little evidence so far to support such a correlation, as far as the history of art forms is concerned. To prove it, one must first distinguish clearly the forms themselves (which Mr. Craven never tries to do) and then correlate them with these other factors. Instead, he merely sprinkles his biographical gossip with a few fragmentary comments on form, rarely suggesting any significant, unfortuitous relations between them. In regard to the subjects which the artists represented, the facts are quite different. Here there are constant, obvious relations to biography and environment, and Mr. Craven dwells on them persuasively. This gives the book the specious appearance of "correlating art with life," which, in any profound sense, it never attempts.

Nowhere in "Men of Art" is any single picture analyzed or discussed at length; to do so would be "tiresome pedantry." The result is that Mr. Craven's sweeping verdicts on each artist's work remain as arbitrary dicta, with few or no examples to support them. His airy, swaggering style, which sounds to the uninformed like forceful writing, is due to sublime self-assurance on points where other critics hesitate. He knows what is good art, what is bad, and exactly why. He is troubled by none of those doubts that make art criticism difficult for "students of philosophy mired in esthetics." He cuts through art history with a single, definite standard, "dramatic human values," separating sheep from goats. Down in the scale, then, go Giorgione, Titian, Vermeer, Velasquez, Poussin, Chardin, Courbet, Cézanne, Renoir, the Impressionists and the Post-Impressionists, in one inglorious heap of sensualists, materialists and triflers with mere visual forms. Up go a few good story-tellers in paint, like Hogarth, Blake and Ryder. Up, still precariously clinging to the top, remain a few old masters like Giotto, Michelangelo, Leonardo, Rubens, Rembrandt and Daumier, because they told good stories in addition to their more trivial pursuits.

Mr. Craven has his right, of course, to this or any other personal evaluation of the history of art. If it is dogmatic, it is no more so than many others. But the reader should be aware that these are Mr. Craven's personal preferences, although stated with all the authority of established facts. In many cases, his statements do deal with fairly objective facts, and state them wrongly. It is, for example, simply untrue that "Giotto uses no local colors"; that "medieval painting was restricted to two dimensions"; that a certain Leonardo drawing is "the earliest independent landscape in Western art"; that "there are

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fewer influences at work in his [Velasquez's] art than in any other painter of importance": that Impressionism "forgot all about art as an expressive medium, painting nature exactly as seen"—and so on, to an extent that renders the book highly unreliable as a factual history.

Many of his critical comments are definitely based on faulty perception, aside from any question of preference. A case in point is his contemptuous reference to Titian as weak in drawing and composition. Where design depends largely on color relations, Mr. Craven is apparently unable to perceive design at all. "The structural test of a painting," he asserts revealingly, "is the black-and-white reproduction. Titian, when subjected to this decolorizing ordeal, fares badly. . . . His color covers a multitude of sins, conceals weaknesses in draughtsmanship." When the form is essentially built of color relations, as it is in much Venetian, Impressionist and Post-Impressionist painting, naturally it vanishes in black and white, and the picture collapses, robbed of its basic strength. To survive in black and white, a picture must be basically built in lines and light and dark spots, with color as a superficial adjunct.

Since he sees so little of importance in pictorial form, it is small wonder that Mr. Craven's advice to the young American painter deals entirely with subject matter. To start a new and distinctive American school, it appears, all we need is to paint "American realities"—the Rockies and Niagara Falls, instead of the Alps and the Seine. Away with all French nudes and apples! Let us paint the "banditry and racketeering of Chicago," the "tractors in the Kansas wheat-fields" and the "proud breed of Californians." If the proud Californian should still be painted in a French or Italian manner, as has usually been the case so far, Mr. Craven will neither know nor care. It will be a brand-new art, and an occasion for much popular flag-waving. As he truly remarks in the last sentence of the book, "Certainly we have profited little by the culture of western Europe."

THOMAS MUNRO.

# Mr. Moore's Pure Novel

*Aphrodite in Aulis, by George Moore. New York: Brentano's. $2.50.*

MME. SIMONE, according to late reports from Paris, has written what she describes as a "pure novel." It is not explained in what sense the celebrated actress uses the adjective, whether to label a certain moral prophylaxis of subject matter, or whether to indicate some further simplification of narrative technique. Pure poetry, of course, has occupied the metaphysicians for a number of years. The final opinion seems to be that it is poetry so devoid of meaning that it might almost be mistaken for music. To George Moore, who has always been a pioneer in these foreign importations, we are indebted for the first anthology of pure poetry in English. Now it hardly seems possible that Mr. Moore can already have heard of Mme. Simone's recent experiment. Yet if we take purity in the novel to mean the paring away of all those elements which are commonly held indispensable to its interest, Mr. Moore has written the purest novel that could well be imagined.

The setting is the small and comparatively obscure city of Aulis in Greece of the time of Pericles. Across the dim landscape, as in a slightly animated bas-relief, move the haloed figures of Phidias, Sophocles, Euripides and other worthies of the age. The principal character, however, is an unknown young rhapsodist from Athens whom a strange voice has lured to Aulis, where he settles down to a respectable career of marriage and commerce. It is never certain toward what end his life is moving; there is much talk of art and beauty; and in the end his two sons, the one an architect, the other a sculptor, erect a temple to Aphrodite in Aulis. The characters are so indistinct that their actions, thoughts and feelings are equally lost in the common Attic-Irish dusk. It is as if Mr. Moore had consciously striven to eliminate character along with everything else that ordinarily gives the illusion of reality to a tale. Everything has been so "purified" that little remains but the impression of Mr. Moore's personality which seeps through the now almost perfect monotone of his prose.

For Mr. Moore has developed a style so personal that it can no longer communicate any mood or sentiment alien to his own. The chemistry of this style is not difficult: its syntax is Pater, its rhythms and archaic diction out of the Authorized Version or the Butcher-Lang translation of Homer. Of its effect one can speak even more definitely. Not only does it seem hollow, self-conscious and affected, but it reduces everything to which it is applied to the same monotonous level. It has the immobility of sleep—or death. There are two passages only in which it effectively coincides with the subject: one in which a character is being slowly lulled to sleep, and one in which an old man describes the sensations of dying. In these passages Mr. Moore succeeds so well that he offers a serious handicap to his reader.

WILLIAM TROY.

# Gentiles Preferred

*Christians Only: A Study in Prejudice, by Heywood Broun and George Britt. New York: The Vanguard Press. 333 pages. $2.50.*

IN ONE significant respect, "Christians Only" classifies itself as a type of social inventory which, to my recollection, came into conspicuous existence with James Harvey Robinson's "Mind in the Making." It presents its case arrestingly, that is; but when it comes to doing anything about it, it is so feeble and fumbling that one feels embarrassed for the authors. Quite inevitably the Britt-Broun therapeutic comes to rest finally on the idea of Individual Salvation. "We shall have to have for our Utopia," they conclude, "a race of people trained always to get to the source of emotions." Which is to say that the authors are *not* uncivilized, as they hint, because they feel irrationally enraged, on occasion, at the Jews they meet in the subway; and that they *are* uncivilized because they embrace the puny and persistent phantom of Change in the Hearts of Men, which has served as salve and poultice for every social renigant (from the verb *to renig*) since Moses underwent his first operation for the sake of the Faith. My understanding of history leaves much to be desired; but once a man tells me that social injustice will cease only when the individual has been educated and tamed, I know that he is yearning for social justice only because of the hygienic benefits of the yearning process, that he will keep on drawing his pay and hoping for the market to look up, and that in this post-Lenin era he will never amount to anything.

Well, then, the book does a very good job of indicating the extent of anti-Jewish discrimination in these States, particularly with respect to New York. And interestingly if not conclusively it ruminates on the reasons for American anti-Jewish feeling. A difficult quest: for while this feel-

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ing is widespread, active and alert, its motivation springs from below the level of consciousness. In any number of cases it is reflected in a definitely expressed preference for "Christians only," and in any number of others as an implied preference to the same effect; but the instances in which anti-Jewish feeling assumes the character of a movement with a manifesto and program are both unimportant and few. Jews themselves insist on "Christians only," in deference to a feeling which is known to exist, and which is not the less socially potent because an exploration of its source brings up nebulous and childish nonsense. The case against the Jews rests on evidence which is irrefutable because it is too irrelevant to bear the light of day. So the tacit conspiracy flourishes without interference, dialectic being quite beside the point.

Two factors in anti-Jewish feeling, both considered by the authors of "Christians Only," appeal to me as worthy of emphasis. One of these is Jewish folkways; the other is Jewish competition in business. Jews on their Jewish high-horse are strange. Sometimes one Jew is a fellow human being, and two Jews are a closed congregation. Dave Glasser and Gabe Cohen, who bunked across from me in a French *caserne,* were two of the eighty-five of us until the paschal season came along, whereupon they packed up their musettes, regarding us with alien glances, and departed on an esoteric mission. On their return they were part of us again. That is the way of it. Sometimes in the company of Jews one has the experience of being excluded quite suddenly from a mystic order. On occasion the attention of the lodge members is concentrated on the outsider, and one experiences the sensation of being a wood animal prodded and provoked by its human captors for the fun of watching it jump.

Still and all, this experience is not confined to one's contact with Jews. Get a bunch of Irish together, all of them able to gabble Gaelic and all of them privy to the esoteric inwards of a culture which you have but glimpsed. There is the same feeling of being tormented and excluded. The thing works, too, with social groups of the same nationality but of different training and profession. Perhaps, after all, no group is more alien to myself than one of American business men. Or of teachers; and often even *one* teacher is too much of a group, for me.

The point has been made that Jews have no compunction about exploiting each other, and it is an obvious one, in view of the fact that the tyrants of history have found it expedient to replace henchmen of their own blood with aliens and slaves. In the foment of the feudal State, a time always comes when the alien serfs are favored, and the freemen, though belonging to the tribe of the rulers, are oppressed. And has American business enterprise hesitated to worsen the condition of native workmen by importing exploitable aliens? However, there is no doubt that the Jewishness of Jews has been used, like the negroid character of the Negroes, as a weapon to eliminate them, wherever possible, from economic fields desired by persons of other descent. Once the nation had a sign out: "No Irish Need Apply." The distinguishing feature of anti-Jewish discrimination is that the conspiracy against its victims seems to grow more intense as they increase in number. Somehow they don't seem to soak in.

Except the "pet Jews," to whom the authors devote considerable prose, and toward whom they feel not too kindly. I do not agree with the tendency to look askance at the Jew who has ground his racial or religious bump down so that you can meet his personality and talent direct. And after all, the objective matters. The pleasure one finds in the company of a man who has forgotten his sect-marks in his absorption in culture or creation naturally cannot be duplicated with one who has let himself be renamed, sprinkled at an Anglican font, and patronized by upstarts and falsestarts, in order to ride to hounds at Meadowbrook.

What makes the Jewish problem ultimately puzzling is perhaps that it is not a problem in itself, but an oddly synthetic aspect of a problem far more fundamental than religion or race. Precisely what, I ask myself, do the now excluded Jews hope flamingly to achieve, once the bars are down? Most of them, like most of us, long for nothing more than a membership in good standing among the tedious Better Element. In this role they will apply themselves valiantly to the maintenance of the present inertia, which already threatens to persist until dissolved by disaster. I may as well admit at once that this prospect does not inspire me with eagerness to battle for the Right, as seen by Messrs. Britt and Broun. I should be glad to see every Jew given leeway to make the best living and social connections he can, but I cannot become enthusiastic over the certainty that he will join the native Babbittry in delaying the time when socially we may all begin to live.

MURRAY GODWIN.

# The Economics of Communism

*The Economic Life of Soviet Russia, by Calvin B. Hoover. New York: The Macmillan Company. 361 pages. $3.*

*Russia's Productive System, by Emile Burns. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 288 pages. $4.*

SOME of the leading propositions of Professor Hoover's book may be summarized as follows:

(1) The present organizational form of Soviet industry is adequate for carrying on large-scale production, and for providing the basic needs of the modern laborer. It is true that at present, because of the pressure of the Five Year Plan, living conditions within the Soviet Union are harder than they have been at any time since the great famine of 1921 and the consequent inauguration of the New Economic Policy. The rise of great factories is accompanied by general undernourishment. But the present standard of living is so low precisely because of the determination to make it much higher in the future; just as an individual, bent on accumulating riches, will deprive himself of present needs and comforts. "If the present crisis is passed"—obviously Professor Hoover is not sure that the present difficulties will be overcome—the Soviet laborer will, within a decade, enjoy a standard of living that will compare favorably with that of the more poorly paid manual workers in capitalistic countries. Professor Hoover does not permit his trained economic imagination to roam beyond a decade, nor does he consider that the capitalistic system has existed rather longer than a decade or two.

(2) The accumulation of a social capital fund is proceeding at a rapid pace. Capital investment greatly exceeds capital depreciation. In the fiscal year 1928-29, capital investment in industry was at least as large as in any pre-war year, and in 1929-30 it was to be more than doubled. Its rate of increase is as fast as in any capitalistic country, and faster than in most. By far the greater part of this accumulation is proceeding according to plan: that is, as an integral part of the industrial process; private saving is of minor importance. The accumulation is much larger than it would or could have been if left to individual initiative.

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Temporarily, this results in much privation and a generally low standard of living.

(3) The revolution in agriculture which is now being forced through—the disappearance of the individual peasant proprietor and the collectivization of agricultural production—is one of the most astounding phenomena in all history. The peasant had been friendly to the Revolution because it permitted and encouraged him to get possession of the landlord's estate, and he fought against the Tsarist generals in order to prevent the return of the landlord. But now the peasant finds himself deprived of his individual holding, and reduced to a position analogous to that of the city laborer: he works for a wage in an agricultural factory. If the experiment succeeds, the Soviet Union will be the only country in the world without a conservative peasant class, the mainstay of the traditional order, of property, family and religion.

(4) Foreign trade, which is a government monopoly, has been completely transformed. Whereas, before the War, the bulk of Russia's imports consisted of consumers' goods, or manufactured articles, and her exports mostly of grain and raw materials, the imports of the Soviet Union now consist mainly of raw materials and capital equipment, while her exports consist mainly of forest, mining and industrial products. This proceeds according to the Plan, but the inability to obtain foreign credits has forced the government to export foods, which are sorely needed at home, in order to pay for capital imports. This is the "dumping" of which there is now universal complaint, and which serves as an excellent pretext for anti-Soviet agitation.

Professor Hoover occasionally permits himself to stray from the strictly economic road into political and other by-paths. Not so Mr. Emile Burns, whose book is cast in a strictly economic mold; it is perhaps the most severely scientific book on Soviet economy that has come to my notice. It is not light reading, but the careful reader will be richly rewarded for his pains. It confines itself to a description of the anatomy and physiology of the Soviet economic system. What are its various organs? How do they function? What are their relations one to another? And what modifications have resulted from their actual functioning and their correlations? Beginning with the year 1920, in which the civil war and the foreign interventions were, in the main, brought to a conclusion, there is given an illuminating account of individual factory management, of the trust and its transformations, likewise of the syndicate until it was supplanted by the combine, and the relations, direct and indirect, of these organizations to the Supreme Economic Council and to the Council of Labor and Defense. There is a special chapter on the organization of the oil industry, which serves as a concrete example of the State industries as a whole. There is also an account of coöperative enterprise, in production as well as in distribution, of regional and municipal enterprise, and of the various forms of agricultural coöperation (collective, artel, commune, in an ascending order). Coming to general economic problems, Mr. Burns reasons that general economic crises, in the accepted sense, are impossible under the Soviet economic system, although special crises (due to faulty planning or execution) are not excluded; the latter, however, can be rectified, whereas the capitalistic system is helpless when confronted by one of its periodic crises. Professor Hoover, on the contrary, is somewhat skeptical; the reduction in unemployment he regards as "of too recent a date to demonstrate with finality that this critical problem has been solved." Both economists agree that the Soviet system works; but while Mr. Burns ascribes its success to the fact that it is planned, Professor Hoover doubts whether it would work without the authoritarian methods of the Soviet. Professor Hoover seems to forget, on occasion, that the Soviet economy is still in the formative stage, and that the capitalist economy did not originate in the free will of the European wage laborers, or of the Negro and Indian slaves.

HERMAN SIMPSON.

# Verse Without Intensity

*Jonathan Gentry, by Mark Van Doren. New York: Albert and Charles Boni. 205 pages. $2.50.*

MR. VAN DOREN seems to have set out to tell the story of the Midwest frontier as it has manifested itself at three critical instants. In the first section of this verse narrative, the first Jonathan Gentry, an Englishman, travels down the Ohio into the wilderness, hopeful of creating a new and different world; in the second section, the third Jonathan and his brother fight in the Civil War, to preserve the hope of their ancestor; in the third part, the fifth Jonathan still struggles, though hopelessly now, to save something of his heritage from the onslaught of modernity. Some such scheme—some scheme, anyhow—must underlie the book; but in fact, the three parts have little relation, and neither separately nor together do they get anywhere in particular. In the first, nothing happens; the original Gentry merely moons around while floating down the river. In the second, the younger brother is killed in the war. In the third, Mrs. Gentry commits suicide because she is bored by farm life. The poem does nothing with its theme, has no narrative interest, shows no sense of character, or dramatic power, not even much lyric or descriptive gift.

This is not to say that Mr. Van Doren's work does not possess qualities of its own. It maintains a crepuscular mood of wistful sentiment and a sort of consistent prettiness which may please those readers who prefer verse without intensity or incisiveness. Mr. Van Doren, however, has chosen to imitate Edwin Arlington Robinson, without displaying any of Robinson's subtlety or sharpness; and the resultant difficulty will be likely to repel the very audience which might have been attracted by a simple, tender sweetness. The success achieved in the last generation by Thomas Bailey Aldrich with his ballad of "Baby Bell" might no doubt be repeated today. But this style cannot be mixed with the vein of E. A. Robinson, nor is it adequate to convey the real story of an Illinois farm. Mr. Van Doren's basic conception seems to have been a good one—but it would have to be worked out in a different way.

T. K. WHIPPLE.

# Book Notes

## BIOGRAPHY

THE MYSTERIOUS MADAME, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky: The Life and Work of the Founder of Modern Theosophy, by C. E. Bechofer-Roberts. *New York: Brewer and Warren. 332 pages. $3.50.*

The amazing Madame Blavatsky, whose robust capacity allowed her to be studying occultism in the Himalayas while she was a bare-back rider in Europe, and to be in communication with so remarkably named a "Master" as Koot Hoomi, receives the benefits and graces of as amusing and witty biography as could be hoped for so rich a subject. The uniqueness of the Russian lady who referred to her former husband as "old whistle britches'

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and translated untranslatable works from unknown tongues into English is equaled only by the gullibility of those who surrounded her. The career of the founder of Theosophy, through spiritualism, jangling bells, manifestations, communications from the Master, to exposure and resultant sanctification by thousands of adherents, is unsurpassed; and her excellent biography is fittingly dedicated to H. L. Mencken.

THEOSOPHY, by Alvin Boyd Kuhn. *New York: Henry Holt and Company. 381 pages. $3.*

Incidents like the materialized cup and saucer, the origins of Koot Hoomi, and Madame Blavatsky's activities in general, are accorded more serious, though cautious, attention in this study, which is "designed to be one of a series in American religion." Emerson, Whitman, "America's own native mysticism" and the hodge-podge of oriental and occidental philosophy which constitutes Theosophy are included in the account of "a modern revival of ancient wisdom." An elaborate statement is made of the secret doctrine, the relation of Theosophy to physical science, the ethics of Theosophy and a history of the movement since the death of the mysterious Madame, whose unequaled charlatanism and personal life still hugely overshadow even such miracles as her own reincarnation, under the personal supervision of Annie Besant, in a young Indian named Krishnamurti.

## VERSE

ANIMOSITIES, by Peggy Bacon. *New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 106 pages, illustrated. $2.50.*

Peggy Bacon is well known as an artist. Her verse has the same originality and distinction as her pictures: it has both dry wit and charm, terseness and precision under an appearance of casualness. This is a book of illustrated epigrams, which, unpretentious as it is, deserves the attention of lovers of poetry. In some of her longer poems, Miss Bacon shows the influence of the omnipresent T. S. Eliot; but in the shorter ones, she has mastered a metric of her own. Her best epigrams have grimness and point, and they extract a peculiar poetry from sordid or impoverished things. "Animosities" is an exceedingly modest book, but of first-rate quality and very amusing.

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF FRANCOIS VILLON, translated by J. U. Nicolson. *New York: Covici-Friede. 316 pages. $3.50.*

This is the first trade edition of a work which was published some years ago in two sumptuous volumes, for collectors. Mr. Nicolson translated all of Villon's poems, including those vaguely attributed to him, into an idiom distinguished more by its colloquial vigor than by its fidelity to the poet's meaning. Reviewers praised the translator for his industry, the book for being readable and complete; but they had a good deal to say about Mr. Nicolson's mistakes. Many of these have since been corrected. The long introduction, in which he undertook to prove, by a chain of wholly fantastic arguments, that Villon was homosexual, has given way to a short and admirable preface by Lewis Galantière. The horrendous illustrations by Alexander King have disappeared entirely. The French text has also been omitted, to the regret of many readers; but in every other respect this new volume is preferable to the limited edition by which it was expensively preceded.

## WORLD POLITICS

TACNA AND ARICA, by William Jefferson Dennis. *New Haven: Yale University Press. 332 pages. $4.*

In this useful survey, Mr. Dennis advances the idea that the United States, in preventing European intervention in the War of the Pacific of forty years ago, was indirectly responsible for the Treaty of Ancon, which poisoned relations between Peru and Chile until very recently. The Coolidge-Hughes award of 1925 was marred by a failure to take into consideration the history of the Tacna-Arica question. Moreover, any plebiscite which did not provide for neutral police was doomed to failure from the beginning. The Treaty of Santiago dividing the provinces between the two countries was a happy solution, not only of this territorial question, but of the difficulties in which American mediation had become involved.

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THE LITTLE ENTENTE, by John O. Crane. *New York: The Macmillan Company. 222 pages. $2.50.*

As private secretary to President Masaryk of Czechoslovakia, the author of this book has had ample opportunity to study his subject in its various phases. His work is honest and painstaking, yet it seldom or never rises above the level of the official-diplomatic. The author seems to know his documents much better than the peoples and their problems.

FICTION

AMBROSE HOLT AND FAMILY, by Susan Glaspell. *New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company. $2.50.*

This pleasant story of the return of a runaway father is built up with a dramatist's art, with neat little climaxes to round out each chapter and prepare the reader for the next. Occasionally the characters seem to be at the mercy of such splendid construction, appearing only when they are needed for the plot, and disappearing conveniently as soon as they have finished their explanations. This is particularly true of Lincoln Holt, distinguished poet and successful business man, who disappears when his situation grows most tense, and at a time when his presence suggests greater dramatic possibilities than his absence supplies.

NO SURRENDER, by Jo Van Ammers-Küller. *Translated by W. D. Robson-Scott. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.50.*

Mrs. Van Ammers-Küller performs a remarkable feat in giving the struggle for votes for women genuine emotional value; she writes as a historical novelist, and no hint of disillusion touches her characters. "No Surrender" is divided somewhat mysteriously into two sections, the first set in Holland and the second in England. There is only a slight relation between the two; one feels that the author's incentive was partly a desire to tell the story of the suffrage movement, and partly a desire to add to the chronicle of the large and growing Cornvelt family.

## Contributors

"HOMER HUDSON" is an American economist, a frequent contributor on business subjects to American and foreign periodicals.

WINIFRED WELLES is the author of a book of verse, "This Delicate Love," and of a book for children, "Skipping Along Alone," soon to be published by Macmillan.

M. R. WERNER, the author of "Barnum," also wrote the history of Tammany Hall, a fact which makes him particularly capable of drawing the comparison between Tammany Hall's best dressed mayors. He recently returned from a visit to Russia and is at present living in New York City.

LEMENT HARRIS, who is at present in the West, recently traveled through the South and Southwest collecting material on present social and economic conditions in those sections.

THOMAS MUNRO is the author of "Great Pictures of Europe" and of "Scientific Method in Esthetics," a subject which he teaches at Rutgers.

WILLIAM TROY, who is an instructor in English at New York University, contributes to The Bookman, The New York Times Book Review and various other magazines and journals.

HERMAN SIMPSON was on the editorial staff of "The International Encyclopedia" and was editor of The New York Call and The New Review. He has contributed extensively to The Bookman, The Independent, The New Freeman, etc.

T. K. WHIPPLE is professor of English at Stanford University. He is the author of "Spokesmen: Modern Writers and American Life" which was published by Appleton in 1928.


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